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COOKE'S EDITION OF SELECT POETS.



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MILTON.

Printed for C. Cooke, 27, Abchurch Lane, Jan: 23. 1800.

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 SELECT BRITISH POETS,
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R. Corbould, delin.

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 Vol. I. p. 81.

W. Hawkins, sculp.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON.

FROM THE
TEXT OF DR. NEWTON.

To which are prefixed,

The Life of the Author;

A CRITICISM ON HIS WORKS, BY

DR. JOHNSON;

And a Critique on *Paradise Lost*, by

Joseph Addison, Esq.

VOL. I.

Cooke's Edition.

Three Poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpass;
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go:
To make a third she join'd the former two.

Dryden.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

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And sold by all the Booksellers in
Great-Britain and
Ireland.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON

FROM THE
TEXT OF DR. NORTON.

EDITED BY
JAMES K. NORTON
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
AND
JAMES K. NORTON
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
VOL. I

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILL.
1903

PRINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILL.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON.

VOLUME I.

Containing

THE NINE FIRST BOOKS
OF
PARADISE LOST.

Milton, with high and haughty stalks,
Unfetter'd, in majestic numbers walks:
No vulgar hero can his muse engage,
Nor earth's wide scene confine his hallow'd rage.
See! see! he upward springs, and, tow'ring high,
Spurns the dull province of mortality;
Shakes Heaven's eternal throne with dire alarms,
And sets th' almighty Thunderer in arms.

Addison.

London:
PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
C. COOKE.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON
VOLUME I

THE FIRST BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST

Printed by W. Stansfeld, at the
Printers Office, No. 1, St. Pauls Church
Yard, London.

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W. Stansfeld, at the
Printers Office, No. 1, St. Pauls Church
Yard, London.

THE LIFE OF MILTON,

WITH

Criticisms on his Works,

By DR. JOHNSON.

JOHN MILTON, the boast of this country, and the admiration of the world, was descended from an honourable family, which had long resided near Thame in Oxfordshire: but the estate annexed to it was forfeited in the perilous times of York and Lancaster. The grandfather of our poet, actuated by that intemperate zeal which is ever excited by bigotry, disinherited the father of our poet, because he renounced the doctrines of the church of Rome, to which his ancestors had been long and warmly attached. Thus deserted, he was reduced to the necessity of exerting his efforts for a support, and accordingly entered on the business of a scrivener, which he prosecuted with such success, as enabled him to retire with a competent fortune. He married a lady of Welsh extraction, by whom, with other children, he had issue, John the Poet.

John Milton, the subject of these memoirs, was born in the city of London, in the year 1608. His father must have been a literary character, as our author addresses him in one of his most elaborate Latin Poems; it was therefore natural for him to be solicitous about the education of his son. He placed him under the private tuition of Thomas Young, a clergyman, to whom, as a token of gratitude for his care and attention, this pupil addressed an Epistolary Elegy, written when he had only attained to the age of twelve years.

Having passed some time at St. Paul's school, to which he was sent when he left Mr. Young, he was removed to Cambridge, and admitted a pensioner of Christ's College in the year 1624. He had acquired a proficiency in the Latin language previous to his admission as a student in the University, as is evident from many of his elegiac compositions, produced in his eighteenth year, from which it appears, in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, that he must have then read the Roman authors with very nice discernment. Indeed, it has been remarked, by an eminent literary character, that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classical elegance.

When he first became a student in the University, he had formed a resolution of devoting himself to the service of the church; but, in course of time, he declined it, from an objection he had to some established rites and ceremonies, to which he must have been under a necessity of subscribing

previous to his being admitted into orders. His words upon this occasion are, "Whoever became a clergyman, must subscribe *slave*, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took conscientiously, he must perjure himself. He thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."

Having taken his degree of Master of Arts, in 1632, he left college, and resided five years with his father at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where he wrote his 'Arcades;' and in 1634 he produced his 'Masque of Comus,' which was presented at Ludlow, then the residence of the Lord President of Wales, and patronized by the Earl of Bridgwater, whose sons and daughters performed in the piece.

The next production of our author was 'Lycidas,' a monody on the death of his friend Edward King. Milton, in this monody, evinces, as Dr. Johnson observes, his knowledge of the Italian writers, by a mixture of longer and shorter verses, according to the rules of Tuscan poetry.

He left England in 1638, and went to Paris, where he visited the renowned Grotius, who resided at the French court as ambassador from the Queen of Sweden. From Paris he departed for Italy, where, from the knowledge he had acquired of the language and literature of the country, he could not fail of commanding the attention and respect of the great and the learned. Notwithstanding the frank and undissembled manner in which he avowed his political and religious opinions, he was introduced, by the keeper of the Vatican library at Rome, to Cardinal Barberini (afterwards Pope Urban VIII.) who, at a musical entertainment, took the bard by the hand, and conducted him into an assembly composed of the first personages in the kingdom.

Having visited Rome, he proceeded to Naples, where he was introduced to Masio, Marquis of Villa, patron of the celebrated Italian Poet Tasso. The Marquis, who was not only an admirer of learning, but a profound scholar himself, complimented Milton in some elegant lines of poetry; and our author returned the obligation in a Latin address, which, Johnson observes, must have raised an high opinion of English elegance and literature. He designed to have extended his travels to Sicily and Greece; but hearing of the commotions which prevailed in England, through the differences which subsisted between Charles I. and the Parliament, he considered himself as called upon by his duty to hasten home, judging it criminal to indulge in foreign amusements, or remain indifferent, while his countrymen were contending for their constitutional rights. He therefore came back to Rome, fearless of danger; though intimation had been given him of designs formed against his

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life, by the Jesuits, for the freedom with which he had animadverted on topics appertaining to their religion. One cause of their enmity is supposed to have arisen from his visiting the great Galileo, at that time a prisoner in the inquisition, for having taught the annual and diurnal motions of the earth.*

On his return to London, he undertook the education of his sister's sons; and received other young persons into his house to be boarded and instructed. In his thirty-fifth year he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell, Esq. a man of respectability in the county of Oxford; but he did not long enjoy the pleasures of a conjugal life, as a separation, or rather desertion, on the part of the wife, took place in the course of a month after the ceremony of the nuptials. He sent her many letters, soliciting her return, but without the least effect: he then dispatched a messenger, whose mission was treated with the utmost indifference. He was induced, by her refractory behaviour, to publish several Treatises on 'The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce.' His wife soon afterwards returned to him.

From the time at which the last mentioned event took place, to the period of the Restoration, Milton was chiefly occupied in political and polemical disquisitions. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, however, appeared in a Collection of Latin and English poems, published in 1645.

It is natural to suppose, from the complexion of the times, in which an ardent love of liberty prevailed, that our author derived much more emolument from his political productions, than from any efforts in the higher departments of literature. This appears evident from the great success which attended the publication of his 'Defence of the People of England,' in answer to Salmasius, professor of the belles lettres at Leyden, a man well versed in languages and antiquity, who was employed by Charles II. when in exile, to write a defence of his father and monarchy, under the title of 'Defensio Regis.' Milton, for his Defence, &c. was rewarded with a thousand pounds; a sum to which the profits resulting from all his poetical publications put together bore no degree of proportion. His allusions in this tract were so poignant, that, according to the report of his partizans, they killed his antagonist with vexation: but the loss of his sight, from a *gutta serena*, which had affected his

* Johnson says he was imprisoned for *philosophical heresy*; a phrase as absurd as illiberal; for if the Deity is known by his works, those who contemplate them most, and explain them best, are entitled to the highest regard; and the objection of Johnson might be urged with equal propriety against the pursuits of the English philosopher Newton, as against those of the Italian philosopher Galileo.

eyes for some time, afforded the partizans of his antagonist ample scope for retort: such are the effects of bigotry and prejudice, which cannot fail of reflecting dishonour on the noblest cause that can be espoused.

But a more important advantage accrued to our author, from his controversial writing, than an immediate pecuniary gratification; for though he had been blind a considerable time, he was appointed Latin Secretary to the Protector; and as his mind was too eager to be diverted, and too strong to be subdued, he discharged his office with the greatest ability. Soon after his appointment to this office he lost his wife, who left him three daughters; but he does not seem to have been much affected by that incident; for within a short time from her demise he espoused another, who did not long survive the former. To the memory of the last he inscribed a few elegiac verses.

As we avow, and wish, upon every occasion, to observe the most inviolable impartiality, we cite the following passage, translated from his second 'Defence of the People of England,' originally written in Latin, from which Johnson infers, with the greatest propriety, that "Cæsar, when he assumed the perpetual dictatorship, had not more servile or more elegant flattery than was bestowed on the Protector." Having exposed the unskilfulness or selfishness of the former government, upon monarchical principles, "We were left," says Milton, addressing himself to Oliver Cromwell, "to ourselves: the whole national interest fell into your hands, and subsists only in your abilities. To your virtue, overpowerful and resistless, every man gives way, except some, who, without equal qualifications, aspire to equal honours; who envy the distinctions of merit greater than their own; or who have yet to learn, that, in the coalition of human society, nothing is more pleasing to God, or more agreeable to reason, than that the highest mind should have the sovereign power. Such, Sir, are you by general confession; such are the things achieved by you, the greatest and most glorious of our countrymen, the director of our public councils, the leader of unconquered armies, the father of your country; for by that title does every good man hail you, with sincere and voluntary praise." Such is the elegant translation of Doctor Johnson from the Latin of Milton; and it is but justice to observe, that it does honour to the original.

The agency of Milton, as secretary to the Protector, was considered as of the highest importance by all the states of Europe. The generality of contemporary politicians ascribed to his pen, the "Declarations of the Reasons for a war with Spain:" and when a treaty with Sweden was, for

private causes, suspended, the Swedish agent, incensed at the delay, contemptuously expressed his wonder, that only one man in England could write Latin, and that man blind.

Being now forty seven years old, and seeing himself disencumbered from interruptions, he seems to have recollected his former purposes, and to have resumed three great works which he had planned for his future employment; an Epic Poem, the History of his Country, and a Dictionary of the Latin Language.

To compile a dictionary, seems a work, of all others, least practicable in a state of blindness; because it depends upon perpetual and minute inspection and collation. Nor would Milton have undertaken it, after he had lost his sight, but having commenced upon it, and made some progress in it, he determined to prosecute it; but Mr. Philips observes, that the papers were so discomposed and deficient, that they could not be prepared for the press. The compilers of the Latin dictionary, printed at Cambridge, had the use of his collection, in manuscript; but the work itself was never published.

When the restoration of Charles II. took place, Milton was no longer secretary, and consequently obliged to quit the house he held by his office, and, for his own security, secrete himself in an obscure abode in Bartholomew Close.

As it was very natural for the friends of monarchy, when they had it in their power, to retaliate on the republican party, by whom they had been treated with the greatest rigour and severity; an order of council was issued to seize Milton's 'Defence of the People of England,' and Goodwin's 'Obstructors of Justice,' another book of the same tendency, and burn them by the hands of the common hangman. The attorney-general had orders to prosecute the authors; but Milton found means to elude the search of the officers who were sent in quest of him.

Soon after the restoration an act of oblivion passed, including all but those who had immediately co-operated in the death of the late king: but Milton, though there was every ground to conclude that he ranked in the number of those excepted by the act, found means to be included in it, and thereby saved his life. We shall relate a little anecdote respecting his escape, as told by Richardson, in his Memoirs, which he received from Pope, as delivered by Betterton. It is as follows: "In the war between the King and Parliament, Davenant, a contemporary author, but attached to the king's party, was made prisoner, and condemned to die; but was spared at the request of Milton, who had great influence with the republican party. When

the turn of success brought Milton into the like danger, Davenant repaid the benefit by appearing in his favour."

In this solitary state of blindness, having no domestic companion or attendant, he entered again into matrimony; but did not by that means improve his fortune, for the lady he espoused brought him no dowry. Dr. Johnson whimsically remarks, that all his wives were virgins, as he declared that he thought it gross and indelicate to be a second husband. Upon what other principles his choice was made cannot now be known; but marriage afforded not much of his happiness. The first wife left him in disgust, and was brought back by terror; the life of the second was short; and the third, as Philips relates, oppressed his children in his lifetime, and cheated them at his death.

Though now in his fifty-second year, infirm, blind, and by no means wealthy, the vigour of his mind was not abated; and he resumed the prosecution of his epic poem of *Paradise Lost* with the utmost alacrity. Many persons may justly be surprised that, under such apparent disqualifications, our author should persist in so arduous an attempt: but Dr. Johnson observes, that "Invention is the only literary labour which blindness cannot obstruct; and therefore he naturally solaced his solitude by the indulgence of his fancy, and the melody of his numbers. He had done what he knew to be necessary previous to poetical excellence; he had acquired extensive learning; he had stored his memory with intellectual treasures. He was skilful in many languages; and had, by reading and composing, attained the full mastery of his own. He would have wanted little help from books, even if he had retained the power of perusing them." The progress he made in this admirable composition must have been remarked by those with whom he lived in habits of intimacy; for when he had treasured up in his memory as many lines as it could retain, he was under the necessity of employing whatever friend might be casually with him, to commit them to paper, not having, for part of the time, a regular amanuensis. This laid the foundation for many remarks and reports. Mr. Philips, who had the perusal of the manuscript for some years previous to its publication, observes, that his poetic vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox to the vernal; and that whatever he attempted at other times was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy ever so much; so that, in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time thereon.

Richardson, who seems to have been very particular in his inquiries into the peculiarities of Milton, relates, that "he would sometimes lie awake whole nights, but not a verse

could he make; and on a sudden his poetical faculty would rush upon him with irresistible impetuosity, and his daughter was immediately called to secure his ideas. At other times he would dictate perhaps forty lines in succession, and then reduce them to half the number." It appears, from his own account, that he composed great part of his poem in the night and morning, seasons when the mind is free from the ordinary occupations of life; and that he poured out with great fluency his "unpremeditated verse." Upon this Dr. Johnson observes, that versification, free, like his, from the distresses of rhyme, must, by a work so long, be made prompt and habitual; and when his thoughts were once adjusted, the words would come at his command.

The incomparable work of 'Paradise Lost,' was finished in 1665, at Chalfont, in Bucks, where the author had retired from the plague, which raged at that time in London. Mr. Elwood, a quaker, and friend of Milton, having perused the copy, said to him, "Thou hast said a great deal upon 'Paradise Lost;' what hast thou to say upon 'Paradise Found?'" a circumstance that induced the author to undertake his poem of 'Paradise Regained.'

When the infection had ceased in London, our author left his country residence, and in 1667 sold the copy of his poem to Samuel Simmons, for the small sum of five pounds in hand, five pounds more when thirteen hundred copies should be sold of the first edition, and the same sum for the second and third editions at the time of their publication. The three editions were to be limited to fifteen hundred copies each. Pursuant to this agreement, Milton received in all fifteen pounds; and his widow, to whom the copy was to devolve, sold all her claim for eight. Such was the first reception of a work that stands in a rank of pre-eminence to all the efforts in the English language; and can boast equality with, if not superiority to, the productions of these much admired bards of the ancients, Homer and Virgil.

Many inquiries have been made, and conjectures offered, respecting the slow progress of this unparalleled poem, both in sale and reputation. That it was not received with universal approbation in the reign of Charles II. and his brother James II. may be justly imputed to political prejudice. The courtiers, who indulged in the sunshine of the favour of these monarchs, could not be supposed to have patronized a man who had exerted such superior talents to effect the downfall of monarchy, and shake the pillars of priestcraft. Besides, in those days, reading had not become a general amusement; and very few, indeed, but persons of the first rank, had attained to a degree of erudition competent to judge the merits of so learned and sublime a work. The professors of

literature were as learned as those of any other time ; but there were very few persons of the middle class who read for amusement or instruction, in comparison with the numerous readers of the various productions of the present age. These we apprehend are very cogent reasons for the tardy progress of this great work at that time ; and to enforce them it may be observed, that when the glorious Revolution took place, and liberty and learning triumphed over despotism and ignorance, the excellencies of ' Paradise Lost,' blazed in their meridian lustre, and the reputation and sale of it proportionally advanced.

After the publication of ' Paradise Lost,' the author continued the pursuit of his studies, and supplied the want of sight by the very odd expedient, of making his daughters read to him ; but he excused his eldest, in consequence of her bodily infirmity, and difficult utterance of speech ; the two others were condemned to the performance of reading and exactly pronouncing all the languages of whatever book he should think proper to peruse, viz. the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French ; all which to be confined to read, without understanding one word, might be supposed a trial of patience beyond endurance. Yet it was endured by both for a long time ; though the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but sometimes broke out into expressions of uneasiness. Dr. Johnson remarks upon this circumstance, that, " in the scene of misery, which this mode of intellectual labour sets before our eyes, it is hard to determine whether the daughters or the father are most to be lamented." A language not understood, can never be read so as to give pleasure.

The last poetical production of Milton was his ' Paradise Regained,' which was his favourite ; and it appears, from what Elwood relates, that he could not bear to hear ' Paradise Lost,' preferred to ' Paradise Regain'd.' But Milton stood alone in his opinion as to the preference of that poem.

To the great veneration due to our author for the multiplicity of his attainments, and the extent of his abilities, may be added a laudable humility, which did not disdain the meanest service to the cause of literature. The poet, the controvertist, the politician, having already condescended to produce a book of rudiments for the use of children, at the close of life composed a book of Logic for the Initiation of Students in Philosophy ; and soon after published a polemical work, entitled a " Treatise on true Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and the best Means to prevent the Growth of Popery."

Three years after his ' Paradise Lost,' he published, his ' History of England,' ' Samson Agonistes,' and ' Paradise

again'd.' The History contains a very short space, beginning with the fabulous account of Geoffry of Monmouth, and ending with the Norman Invasion. The style is antique, and as he himself indicates doubts of the veracity of Geoffry's account, the only inducement to read it under those disadvantages must be, that it was written by Milton.

Our great author having attained his sixty-sixth year, and been long tormented with the gout, which prevailed over the enfeebled powers of nature, expired on the tenth of November, 1674, and was buried in the Chancel of St. Giles's Cripplegate. His funeral was attended by many persons of the first rank and abilities in the kingdom; and a small monument has been erected, not long since, to his memory, in Westminster-abbey. He left 1500*l.* to his family, a proof that he did not die in indigent circumstances.

Milton is represented as highly agreeable in person. His stature did not exceed the middle size. His hair, which was of a light brown, parted at the fore-top, and hung down upon his shoulders, according to the picture he has given of Adam. He was vigorous and active, and excelled in the exercise of the sword, and particularly the backsword, the use of which he recommends in his 'Treatise on Education.' He was abstemious in his diet, and disliked all strong liquors. In his youth he studied late; but in more advanced life he reversed his hours, resting from nine to four in the summer, and five in the winter. His amusement consisted in the conversation of his friends, and in music, in which he was a great proficient; and thus passed the latter and most tranquil part of his life, between the occupation of study, amusement, and social intercourse.

He was so much attached to republican principles, that, regardless of his fortune, in the civil wars, he lent his personal estate to the Parliament, which was never restored; and all the compensation he received, was the appointment to the office of Latin Secretary, with the trifling salary of two hundred pounds a year; and a gratification of a thousand pounds for his 'Defence of the People.'

He was universally allowed to have been a man of profound knowledge, and versed in all the languages, either learned or polite, ancient or modern. as he perfectly understood the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish. His skill in the Latin was so consummate, as to place him in the most eminent station, either as critic or writer; and his Italian poetry abundantly proves that he had studied that language, in particular, with the greatest assiduity. Of all the ancient authors, he was most delighted with Homer; a bard so congenial with himself, that, from frequent reading, he could repeat the greatest part of his works.

Of the English poets he preferred Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley; and to shew that the greatest of men have their prejudices, we add, from the authority of Dr. Johnson, that his character of Dryden, who sometimes visited him, was, that he was a good rhymist, but no poet. This prejudice we suppose to have arisen from a difference in political principles.

His theological opinions, in the early part of life, were Calvinistical; but when his judgment became more ripened, and moderation superseded zeal, they tended towards Arminianism. In his theological writings he evinces the greatest dislike to Popery and Prelacy, considering the latter as an appendage to the former; but in the advanced part of life, he was not attached to any particular denomination, judging mankind not by their opinions, but their actions.

We shall state his political opinions as given by Dr. Johnson, in terms of equal point and significance.

“His political notions,” says the Doctor, “were those of an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that a popular government was the most frugal; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth. It is surely very shallow policy that supposes money to be the chief good; and even this, without considering that the support and expences of a court is, for the most part, only a particular kind of traffic, for which money is circulated, without any national impoverishment.

“Milton’s republicanism was, I am afraid, founded in an envious hatred of greatness, and a sullen desire of independence; in petulance impatient of control, and in pride disdainful of superiority. He hated monarchs in the state, and prelates in the church; for he hated all whom he was required to obey. It is to be suspected, that his predominant desire was to destroy rather than to establish; and that he felt not so much the love of liberty, as repugnance to authority.

“It has been observed, that they who most loudly clamour for liberty, do not most liberally grant it. What we know of Milton’s character in domestic relations is, that he was severe and arbitrary. His family consisted of women; and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferior beings. He thought woman made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion.”

Thus is Milton’s political character portrayed by Dr. Johnson, who, in his remarks on our great author, evinces his own prejudice in favour of political opinions diametrically opposite, and appears to have been as great an enthusiast in the cause of monarchy and hierarchy, as Milton was

in that of republicanism and ecclesiastical equality; from which we may infer, that nothing tends so powerfully to bias even the most enlightened mind, and warp the most correct judgment, as intemperate zeal for political or religious opinions, which have been the basis of the greatest evils that have annoyed human society.

But the sublime genius and profounderudition of this great man are now universally admired by all parties: the politician is lost in the poet; and enlightened men, of every persuasion, acknowledge him to have been an honour to his country in particular, and an ornament to mankind in general. Much respect was paid to his descendants after his decease. Mr. Addison, when Secretary of State, made one of his daughters a handsome present; recommended her to the notice of Queen Caroline, consort of George II. and promised her a comfortable establishment, but died soon after.

In 1750 *Comus* was performed for the benefit of the same daughter, who was patronized in the undertaking by Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, a prelate whose learning and humanity did honour to his profession; and Dr. Johnson, liberally divesting himself of his prejudices, wrote a prologue on the occasion; which, at the conclusion of the life of our immortal bard, the Doctor acknowledges he had the honour of contributing. His words are, "This was the greatest benefaction that '*Paradise Lost*' ever procured the author's descendants; and to this, he, who has now attempted to relate his life, had the honour of contributing a prologue."

The writers of the life of Milton have in general declined entering into a critical examination of his works, contenting themselves with subscribing to the universal opinion of his excellence in the sublime, and that he stands without competition as an English epic poet, his '*Paradise Lost*' being infinitely superior to any production of the kind ever attempted in our language. Mr. Addison has written some excellent notes on '*Paradise Lost*;' but Dr. Johnson has left us copious animadversions on his works in general, which, as they indicate a profound judgment, though occasionally tinged with his usual asperity, will form the basis of our remarks.

This great critic commences his examination of Milton's poetical works with his juvenile productions, to which he ascribes general, though not equal merit. He adverts to what he calls preludes to our author's future labours, written in Italian, Latin, and English. With respect to the Italian, he professes himself incompetent to speak as a critic, observing only, that he had heard them commented on by a man well qualified to decide their merits. The Latin pieces, he says, are lusciously elegant; but the delight which they afford

is rather by the imitation of ancient writers, by the purity of the diction, and the harmony of the numbers, than by any power of invention or vigour of sentiment. This remark we conceive to be dictated by prejudice, if a judgment may be formed from his more eminent productions, which evince such superior strength and originality of genius. He adds, that the Latin pieces are not of equal value, as the Elegies excel the Odes; and observes, in conformity to his political maxims, that some of the Exercises on Gunpowder Treason might have been spared. The English poems, he says, though they make no promise of 'Paradise Lost,' have this evidence of genius, that they have a cast original and unborrowed; but he adds, their peculiarity is not excellence. "If they differ from others," he says, "they differ for the worse: for they are too much distinguished by repulsive harshness: the combination of words are new, but they are not pleasing; the rhymes and epithets seem to be laboriously sought, and violently applied." It appears, however, from his manuscripts, preserved at Cambridge, that, in the early part of life, he wrote with much care; and had been indefatigably assiduous in the cultivation of his mind.

The Doctor passes no eulogium on Milton's little pieces, which he conceives to be deficient in neatness and elegance, observing, that the author never learned the art of doing little things with grace; that he overlooked the milder excellence of suavity and softness: he calls him a *lion* that had no skill *in dandling the kid*. He considers the monody of Lycidas as exceptionable in many instances, and is of opinion that the approbation bestowed upon it is the effect of partiality to the author, rather than the intrinsic merit of the poem. "Such," he says, "is the power of reputation justly acquired, that its blaze drives away the eye from nice examination."

Of the two pieces 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso,' he thus remarks, with equal candour and justice: "I believe opinion is uniform; every man that reads them, reads them with pleasure."

The Doctor then enters into a minute criticism on these two pieces, and evinces such extraordinary abilities for this very arduous department of literature, that we shall recapitulate his remarks for the amusement of our poetical readers.

"The author's design," he says, "is not what Theobald has remarked, merely to shew how objects derive their colours from the mind, by representing the operations of the same things upon the gay and melancholy temper, or upon the same man, as he is differently disposed, but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.

"The cheerful man hears the lark in the morning; the

penfive man hears the nightingale in the evening. The *cheerful* man fees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, *not unfeen*, to obferve the glory of the rifing fun; or liften to the finging milk-maid, and views the labours of the plowman and the mower; then cafts his eyes around him over fcenes of fmiling plenty, and looks up to the diftant tower, the refidence of fome fair inhabitant: thus he purfues rural gaiety through a day of labour, or of play, and delights himfelf at night with the fanciful narratives of fuperftitious ignorance.

“ The *penfive* man walks *unfeen* to mufe at midnight; and hears the fullen carfew. If the weather drives him home, he fits in a room lighted only by *glowing embers*, or, by a lonely lamp, outwatches the north ftar, to difcover the habitation of feparate fouls; and varies the fhades of meditation, by contemplating the magnificent and pathetic fcenes of tragic and epic poetry. When the morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark tracklefs wood, falls afleep by fome murmuring water, and with melancholy enthufiafm expects fome dream of prognostication, or fome mufic played by aerial performers.

“ Both mirth and melancholy are folitary, filent inhabitants of the breaft, that neither receive nor transmit communication; no mention is therefore made of a philofophical friend, or a pleafant companion. The ferioufnefs does not arife from any participation of calamity, nor the gaiety from the pleafures of the battle.

“ The man of *cheerfulnefs*, having exhausted the country, tries what toward cities will afford, and mingles with fcenes of fplendour, gay affemblies, and nuptial feftivities; but he mingles a mere fpectator; as when the learned comedies of Jonfon, or the wild dramas of Shakfpeare, are exhibited, he attends the theatre.

“ The *penfive* man never lofes himfelf in crowds, but walks the cloifter, or frequents the cathedral. Milton probably had not yet forfaken the church.

“ Both his characters delight in mufic; but he feems to think that cheerful notes would have obtained from Pluto a complete difmiffion of Eurydice, of whom folemn founds only procured an additional releafe.

“ For the old age of *Cheerfulnefs* he makes no provifion, but *Melancholy* he conducts with great dignity to the clofe of life. His *cheerfulnefs* is without levity, and his *penfivenefs* without austeri-ty.

“ Through thefe two poems the images are properly felected, and nicely diftinguifhed; but the colours of the diction feem not fufficiently difcriminated. I know not whe-

ther the characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy, but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination."

Mr. Warton, Professor of poetry in the University of Oxford, intimates, that Milton borrowed many of the images in these two fine poems from "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," a book published in 1624, and at sundry times since, abounding in learning, curious information, and pleasantry. Mr. Warton says, that Milton appears to have been an attentive reader of this book; and we can vouch, from the authority of a literary friend of Dr. Johnson's, that the Doctor frequently resorted to the same book for amusement after the fatigue of study.

The greatest of our author's juvenile productions is the Masque of Comus, in which, as the critic remarks, may very plainly be discovered the dawn or twilight of Paradise Lost; and we observe further, upon his authority, that a work more truly poetical is rarely found; allusions, images, and descriptive epithets, embellish every period with lavish decorations. As a series of lines, therefore, it may be considered as worthy of all the admiration with which the votaries have received it; as a drama it is deficient, the action is not probable.

"A Masque, in those parts where supernatural intervention is admitted, must indeed be given up to all the freaks of imagination; but, so far as the action is merely human, it ought to be reasonable, which can hardly be said of the conduct of the two brothers, who, when their sister sinks with fatigue in a pathless wilderness, wander both away together, in search of berries, too far to find their way back, and leave a helpless female to all the sadness and danger of solitude. This, however, is a defect overbalanced by its convenience. What deserves more reprehension is, that the prologue, spoken in the wild wood by the attendant Spirit, is addressed to the audience; a mode of communication so contrary to the nature of dramatic representation, that no precedents can support it.

"The discourse of the Spirit is too long; an objection that may be made to almost all the following speeches; they have not the sprightliness of a dialogue, animated by reciprocal contention, but seem rather declamations deliberately composed, and formally repeated, on a moral question. The auditor, therefore, listens as to a lecture, without passion, without anxiety. The song of Comus has airiness and jollity; but, what may recommend Milton's morals as well as his poetry, the invitations to poetry are so general, that

they excite no distinct images of corrupt enjoyment, and take no dangerous hold on the fancy.

“The soliloquies of Comus are elegant, but tedious; and we cannot but remark that, unless they are delivered with great judgment, rather pall than entertain the auditors. The language is poetical, and the sentiments are noble, the songs are animating, and full of imagery; and it is, upon the whole, drawn in the epic style, splendid and instructive.”

We have now only to observe that the songs were set to music by the late Dr. Arne, at the revival of the piece on the English stage, which in consequence had a considerable run; and the beautiful air of Sweet Echo, by Sabrina, the Pastoral Nymph, has always a most delightful and enchanting effect.*

The Sonnets of Milton deserve not any particular comments; for of the best it can only be said, that they are not bad; and perhaps only the eighth and twenty-first are truly entitled to this slender commendation. The fabric of a Sonnet, however adapted to the Italian language, has never succeeded in ours, which, having greater variety of terminations, requires the rhymes to be often changed. Those little pieces may be dispatched without much anxiety; a greater work calls for greater care.

Dr. Johnson prefaces his admirable criticism on Milton's *Paradise Lost* with some very pertinent remarks, which shew his great judgment of the nature and design of poetry. Having dismissed his examination of the merits of the former works, he thus proceeds:

“I am now to examine *Paradise Lost*, a poem which, considered with respect to design, may claim the first place, and, with respect to performance, the second, among the productions of the human mind.

“By the general consent of critics, the first praise of genius is due to the writer of an Epic Poem, as it requires an assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient for other compositions. Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason.—Epic Poetry undertakes to teach the most important truths by the most pleasing precepts, and therefore relates some great event in the most affecting manner. History must supply the writer with the rudiments of narration, which he must improve and exalt by a nobler art, must animate by dramatic energy, and diversify by retrospection and anticipation. Morality must teach him the just bounds and different shades of vice and virtue; from policy and the practice of life, he has to learn the description of characters, and

* As it is not our general plan to insert any regular dramatic piece in our poetical collection, the Masque of Comus will be included in our British Theatre.

the tendency of the passions, either single or combined; and physiology must supply him with illustrations and images. To put these materials to poetical use, is required an imagination capable of painting nature, and realizing fiction. Nor is he yet a poet, till he has attained the whole extension of his language, distinguished all the delicacies of phrase, and all the colours of words, and learned to adjust their different sounds to all the varieties of metrical modulation."

The Doctor further observes that Bossu, an eminent French critic, is of opinion, that the poet's first work is to find a *moral*, which his fable is afterwards to illustrate and establish; and from thence takes occasion to remark, that this seems to have been the process only of Milton, and that the moral of other poems is incidental and consequent: in Milton's only it is essential and intrinsic. His purpose was the most useful and the most arduous; "*to vindicate the ways of God to man*; to shew the reasonableness of religion, and the necessity of obedience to the Divine Law."

"To convey this moral," our critic proceeds to state, "there must be a fable, a narration artfully constructed, so as to excite curiosity, surprise, and expectation. In this part of his work, Milton must be confessed to have equalled every other poet. He has involved in his account of the fall of man, the events which preceded, and those which were to follow it; he has interwoven the system of theology with such propriety, that every part appears necessary, and scarcely any recital is wished shorter for the sake of quickening the progress of the main action.

"The subject of an epic poem is an event of great importance. That of Milton is not the destruction of a city, the conduct of a colony, or the foundation of an empire; his subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and earth, rebellion against the Supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures; their original happiness and innocence; their forfeiture of immortality; and their restoration to hope and peace. Great events can be hastened or retarded only by persons of elevated dignity. Before the greatness displayed in Milton's poem, all other greatness shrinks away. The weakest of his agents are the highest and noblest of human beings, the original parents of mankind, with whose actions the elements consented; on whose rectitude or deviation of will depended the state of terrestrial nature, and the condition of all the future inhabitants of the globe.

"Of other agents in the poem, the chief are such as it is

irreverence to name on slight occasions. The rest were lower powers;

----- Of which the least could wield
Those elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions;-----

Powers which only the control of Omnipotence could restrain from laying creation waste, and filling the vast expanse of space with ruin and confusion. To display the motives and actions of beings thus superior, so far as human reason can examine them, is the task which this great Poet has undertaken, and performed.

“In the examination of epic-poems, much speculation is commonly employed on the *characters*. The characters in ‘Paradise Lost,’ which admit of examination, are those of angels and man; of angels, good and evil; of man, in his innocent and sinful state.

“Of the *probable* and the *marvellous*, two parts of an epic-poem which immerse the critic in deep consideration, the ‘Paradise Lost’ requires little to be said. It contains the history and redemption; it displays the power and mercy of the Supreme Being; the probable is marvellous, and the marvellous is probable. The substance of the narrative is truth; and as truth allows no choice, it is, like necessity, superior to rule. To the accidental, or adventitious parts, as to every thing human, some slight exceptions may be made, but the main fabric is immoveably supported.”

Dr. Johnson’s observes, that it is justly remarked by Addison, that “this poem, by the nature of its subject, has the advantage above all others, as it is universally and perpetually interesting. All mankind will, throughout all ages, bear the same relation to Adam and to Eve, and must partake of that good and evil which extend to themselves.

“To the completeness of the design nothing can be objected; it has distinctly and clearly what is requisite for a finished poem; a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is not, perhaps, any poem of the same length, from which so little can be taken without apparent mutilation. The thoughts, which are occasionally called forth in the progress of this sublime composition, are such as could only be produced by an imagination, in the highest degree fervid and active, to which materials were supplied by incessant study and unlimited curiosity. The heat of Milton’s mind might be said to sublimate his learning, to throw off, into his work, the spirit of science unmingled with its grosser parts.

“He had considered creation in its whole extent; his descriptions are therefore learned. He had accustomed his imagination to unrestrained indulgence; his conceptions were therefore extensive. The characteristic quality of his

poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace; but his natural part is gigantic loftiness. He can please when pleasure is required; but it is his peculiar power to astonish.

“He seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius, and to know what it was that nature had bestowed upon him more bountifully than upon others; the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful; he therefore chose a subject on which too much could not be said; on which he might tire his fancy without the censure of extravagance.

“The appearance of nature, and the occurrences of life, did not satiate his appetite of greatness. To paint things as they are, requires a minute attention, and employs the memory rather than the fancy. Milton's delight was to sport in the wide regions of possibility; reality was a scene too narrow for his mind. He sent his faculties out upon discovery into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new modes of existence, and furnish sentiment and action to superior beings; to trace the counsels of hell, or accompany the choirs of heaven. But he could not always be in other worlds; he must sometimes revisit earth, and tell of things visible and known. When he cannot raise wonder by the sublimity of his mind, he gives delights by its fertility.

“Whatever be his subject, he never fails to fill the imagination. But his images and descriptions of the scenes or operations of Nature, do not seem to be always copied from original form, nor to have the freshness and energy of immediate observations. He saw nature, as Dryden expresses it, “through the spectacles of books,” and, on most occasions, calls learning to his assistance. The garden of Eden brings to his mind the vale of Enna, where Proserpine was gathering flowers. Satan makes his way through fighting elements, like Argo between the Cyanean rocks, or Ulysses between the two Sicilian whirlpools, when he shunned Charybdis on the left. The mythological allusions have been justly censured, as not being always introduced with propriety; yet they contribute variety to the narration, and produce an alternate exercise of the memory and the fancy.

“His similes are less numerous, and more various, than those of his predecessors: but he does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison: his great excellence is amplitude, and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimensions which the occasion required. Thus comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the moon, he crowds the

imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovers.

“Of his moral sentiments, it is hardly praise to affirm, that they excel those of all other poets: for this superiority he was indebted to his acquaintance with the sacred writings. The ancient epic poets, wanting the light of revelation, were unskilful teachers of virtue; their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. In Milton, every line breathes sanctity of thought, and purity of manners; except when the train of the narration requires the introduction of rebellious spirits; and even they are compelled to acknowledge their subjection to the Deity, in such a manner as excites reverence, and confirms piety.

“Of human beings, in this sublime poem, there are but two; but those two are the parents of mankind, venerable before the fall for dignity and innocence, and amiable after it for repentance and submission. In their first state, their affection and their piety are sublime without presumption.

“As human passions did not enter the world before the fall, there is in ‘Paradise Lost’ little opportunity for the pathetic; but what little there is has not been lost. The passions are moved only upon occasion. Sublimity is the general and prevailing quality in this poem; sublimity variously modified; sometimes descriptive, sometimes argumentative.

“Pleasure and terror are the genuine sources of poetry; but poetical pleasure must be such as human imagination can at least conceive, and poetical terror, such as human strength and fortitude may combat. Known truths, however, may be conveyed to the mind, by a new train of intermediate images. This Milton had undertaken, and performed, with a pregnancy and vigour of mind, peculiar to himself. Whoever considers the few radical positions which the sacred writings afforded him, will wonder by what energetic operation he expanded them to such extent, and ramified them to so much variety, restrained, as he was, by religious reverence, from licentiousness of fiction.

“Here is a full display of the united force of study and genius; of a great accumulation of materials, with judgment to digest and fancy to combine them. Milton was able to select from nature, or from story, from an ancient fable, or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts. An accumulation of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermented by study, and exalted by imagination. It has therefore been said, without an indecent hyperbole, by one of his encomiasts, that, in reading ‘Paradise Lost,’ he found universal knowledge.

“One objection of Milton’s design, is, that he attempts

what cannot be described, the agency of spirits. He saw that immateriality supplied no images, and that he could not shew angels acting but by instruments of action; he therefore invested them with form and matter. This being necessary, was therefore defensible; but the author should have secured the consistency of his system, by keeping immateriality out of sight, and enticing his readers to drop it from their thoughts. The confusion of spirit and matter, which pervades the whole narration of the war of heaven, fills it with incongruity." And the Doctor further gives it as his opinion, "that the book in which it is related, is the favourite of children, and will be gradually neglected as knowledge is increased.

"After the operation of material agents, which cannot be explained, may be considered those of allegorical persons, which have no real existence. To exalt causes into agents, to invest abstract ideas with forms, and animate them with activity, has always been the right of poetry. But such aerial beings are, for the most part, suffered only to do their natural office, and retire. Thus Fame tells a tale, and Victory hovers over a general, or perches on a standard; but Fame and Victory can do no more. To give them any real employment, or ascribe to them any material agency, is to make them allegorical no longer, but to shock the mind by ascribing effects to non-entity."

Dryden remarks, that Milton has some flats among his elevations. "This," the Doctor observes, "is only to say, that all the parts are not equal. In every work, one part must be for the sake of others; a palace must have passages; a poem must have transitions. It is no more to be required, that wit should always be blazing, than that the sun should always stand at noon. In a great work, there is a vicissitude of luminous and opaque parts, as there is in the world a succession of day and night. Milton, when he has expiated on the sky, may be allowed sometimes to revisit earth; for what other author ever soared so high, or sustained his flight so long?

"Such," concludes the critic, "are the defects of that wonderful performance 'Paradise Lost,' which he, who could put in balance with its beauties, must be considered not as nice, but as dull; as less to be censured for want of candour, than pitied for want of sensibility."

Of 'Paradise Regained,' Dr. Johnson thinks the general judgment to be right; that it is, in many parts, elegant, and every where instructive. It was not to be reasonably supposed, that the writer of 'Paradise Lost,' could ever write without great effusions of fancy, and exalted precepts of wisdom. The business of 'Paradise Regained' is circumscribed;

dob

gop

gop

go

gop

gop

gop

dob

dob

do

a dialogue, without action, can never please like an union of the narrative and dramatic powers. "Had this poem," says the doctor, "been written not by Milton, but by some imitator, it would have claimed and received universal praise."

In 'Samson Agonistes,' there are many particular beauties, many just sentiments and striking lines; but it wants that power of attracting the attention which a well-digested plan produces. Milton seems to have been attached to the ancient tragedies, with their encumbrance of a chorus, in preference to the exhibitions on the English stage. He knew human nature only in the gross, and had never studied the shades of character, nor the combinations of concurring, or the perplexity of contending, passions. He had read much, and knew what books could teach; but had mingled little in the world, and was deficient in the knowledge which experience must confer. Through all his greater works, there prevails an uniform peculiarity of diction, a mode and cast of expression, which bears little resemblance to that of any former writer, and which is so far removed from common use, that an unlearned reader, when he first opens the book, finds a new language. This novelty has been imputed by those, who can find nothing wrong in Milton, to his laborious endeavours after words suitable to the grandeur of his ideas. "Our language," says Addison, "sank under him;" but, in the opinion of our critic, "he had formed his style by a pedantic principle. He was desirous to use English words with a foreign idiom. This, in all his prose, is discovered and censured; but such is the power of his poetry, that his call is obeyed without resistance; the reader feels himself in captivity to a higher and a nobler mind; criticism sinks in admiration.

Milton's style was not modified by his subject: what is shown, with greater extent, in *Paradise Lost*, may be found in *Comus*. One source of his peculiarity was his familiarity with the Tuscan poets, and the disposition of his words appears frequently to be Italian, and sometimes combined with other languages. Dr. Johnson observes, that it may be said of Milton, what a former commentator said of Spenser, that he wrote no language; but has formed what Butler calls a 'Babylonish dialect;' in itself, harsh and barbarous; but made, by exalted genius, and extensive learning, the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure, that, like other lovers, we find grace in deformity: and the critic sums up these observations with remarking, that, whatever be the faults of his diction, he cannot want the praise of copiousness and variety: he was master of his language in its full extent, and has selected the melodious words with such di-

ligence, that from his book alone, the 'Art of English Poetry' might be learned.

The Doctor then proceeds to some observations on the versification of our immortal Bard, and adverts to his own expression, wherein he says, "The measure (that is of his *Paradise Lost*) is the English heroic verse without rhyme." On this he remarks, that of this mode he had many examples among the Italians, and some in his own country; and further, that the Earl of Surry is said to have translated one of Virgil's books without rhyme; and besides our tragedies, a few short poems had appeared in blank verse, particularly one tending to reconcile the nation to Raleigh's wild attempt upon Guiana, and probably written by Raleigh himself; but he adds, these petty performances cannot be supposed to have much influenced Milton, who more probably took his hint from Trissino's "*Italia Liberata*;" and finding blank verse easier than rhyme, was desirous of persuading himself that it is better.

He then passed on to another expression of our Author, which is, that "Rhyme is no necessary adjunct of true Poetry." To the truth of this the Doctor subscribes; but, at the same time, remarks, that though of poetry, as a mental operation, metre, or music, perhaps, is no necessary adjunct; it is known by the music of metre, that poetry has been discriminated in all languages; and in languages melodiously constructed, with a due proportion of long and short syllables, metre is sufficient. But he observes further, that one language cannot communicate its rules to another; where metre is scanty and imperfect, some help is necessary; that the music of the English heroic lines strike the ear so faintly, that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together; that this co-operation can only be obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another as a distinct system of sounds, and this distinction is obtained and preserved by the artifice of rhyme; that the variety of pauses, so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse, changes the measures of an English poet to the periods; and lastly, that there are only a few happy readers of Milton, who enable their audience to perceive where the lines end or begin; and concludes with the observation of an ingenious critic, as he calls him, "that blank verse seems to be verse only to the eye."

"Poetry," our Critic further observes, "may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please; nor can rhyme ever be safely spared, but where the subject is able to support itself. Blank verse makes some approach to that which is called the *lapidary style*; has neither the easiness of prose, nor the melody of numbers, and therefore

tires by long continuance. Of the Italian writers without rhyme, whom he alledges as precedents, not one is popular; what reason could urge in its defence, has been confuted by the ear." Dr. Johnson, notwithstanding his evident predilection in favour of that species of poetry which is called rhyme, in contradistinction to blank verse, entertains so high an opinion of our immortal Bard, that he makes the following observation.

"But, whatever be the advantages of rhyme, I cannot prevail on myself to wish that Milton had been a rhymers; for I cannot wish his work to be other than it is; yet, like other heroes, he is to be admired rather than imitated. He that thinks himself capable of astonishing, may write blank verse; but those that hope only to please, must condescend to rhyme."

In the summing up of this inimitable criticism upon an inimitable production, Dr. Johnson evinces an equal degree of judgment and candour; we therefore adopt it with singular pleasure and satisfaction.

"The highest praise of genius is original invention. Milton cannot be said to have contrived the structure of an epic poem, and therefore owes reverence to that vigour and amplitude of mind to which all generations must be indebted for the art of poetical narration, for the texture of the fable, the variation of incidents, the interposition of dialogue, and all the stratagems that surprise and enchain attention. But of all borrowers from Homer, Milton is perhaps the least indebted. He was naturally a thinker for himself, confident of his own abilities, and disdainful of help or hindrance: he did not refuse admission to the thoughts or images of his predecessors; but he did not seek them. From his contemporaries he neither courted nor received support: there is in his writings nothing by which the pride of other authors can be gratified or favour gained; no exchange of praise nor solicitation of support. His great works were performed under discountenance, and in blindness; but difficulties vanished at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous; and his work is not the greatest of heroic poems, only because it is not the first."

A
GENERAL CRITIQUE

UPON THE
PARADISE LOST,
BY JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQUIRE.

Cedite Romani scriptares, cedite Graii ! Propert.

THERE is not any thing in nature more irksome than general discourses, especially when they turn chiefly upon words; for this reason I shall wave that discussion which was advanced some years since, Whether Milton's *Paradise Lost* may be called an heroic poem? Those who will not give it that title, may call it (if they please) a divine poem. It will be sufficient to its perfection if it possess all the beauties of the highest kind of poetry; and those who alledge it is not an heroic poem, advance no more to the diminution of its excellence, than if they should say, Adam is not *Æneas*, nor Eve Helen.

I shall therefore examine it by the rules of epic poetry, and see whether it falls short of the *Iliad* or *Æneid* in the beauties which are essential to that kind of writing. The first thing to be considered in an epic poem is the fable, which is perfect or imperfect, according as the action it relates is more or less so. This action should have three qualifications. First, it should be but one action: Secondly, it should be an entire action: and, thirdly, it should be a great action. To consider the action of the *Iliad*, *Æneid*, and *Paradise Lost*, in these three several lights: Homer, to preserve the unity of his action, comes to the point at once, as Horace has observed: had he gone up to Leda's egg, or begun much later, even at the rape of Helen, or the investing of Troy, it is manifest that the story of the poem would have been a series of several actions. He, therefore, opens his poem with the discord of his princes, and artfully interweaves, in the several succeeding parts, an account of every thing material which relates to them, or that had passed before this fatal dissention. After the same manner *Æneas* makes his first appearance in the Tyrrhene seas, and within sight of Italy, because the action proposed to be celebrated was that of settling himself in Latium: but because it was necessary to inform the reader, what had happened to him in the taking of Troy, and in the preceding parts of his voyage, Virgil makes his hero relate it by way of episode, in the second and third books of the *Æneid*; the contents of which come

before those of the first book in the course of the story; though, for the preservation of this unity of action, they follow it in the disposition of the poem. Milton, in imitation of these two great poets, commences his *Paradise Lost* with an infernal council plotting the fall of man, which is the action he proposed to celebrate; and as for those great actions, the battle of the angels, and the creation of the world, (which preceded in point of time, and which, in my opinion, would have entirely destroyed the unity of his principal action, had he related them in the same order that they happened,) he introduced them in the fifth, sixth, and seventh books, by way of episode to this sublime poem.

Aristotle himself allows, that Homer has nothing to boast of as to the unity of his fable; though that great critic and philosopher endeavours to palliate this imperfection in the Greek poet, by imputing it, in some measure, to the very nature of an epic poem. Some have been of opinion that the *Æneid* also is deficient in this particular, and has episodes, which may be looked upon as excrescences, rather than as parts of the action. On the contrary, the poem which we have now under our consideration has no other episodes than such as naturally arise from the subject, and yet is filled with such a multitude of astonishing incidents, that it gives us at once a pleasure of the most extensive variety, and the greatest simplicity; uniform in its nature, though diversified in the execution.

I must observe, also, that as Virgil, in the poem which was designed to celebrate the founder of the Roman empire, has described the origin of its great rival, the Carthaginian commonwealth; Milton, with the like art, in his poem on the fall of Man, has related the fall of those angels who are his professed enemies. Beside the many other beauties in such an episode, its running parallel with the great action of the poem, prevents it from breaking the unity, so much as another episode which had not so great an affinity with the principle subject. In short, this is the same kind of beauty which the critics admire in the *Spanish Friar*, or the *Double Discovery*; where the two different plots appear as counterparts and copies.

The second qualification required in the action of an epic poem is, that it should be an entire action. An action is entire when it is complete in all its parts; or, as Aristotle describes it, when it consists of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it, that is not related to it; as, on the contrary, no single part should be omitted in that just and regular progress which it must be supposed to take from its

origin to its consummation. Thus we see the anger of Achilles in its commencement, its continuance, and effects; and Æneas's settlement in Italy, carried on through all the oppositions in its way to it, both by sea and land. The action in Milton excels, I think, both the former in this particular; we see it contrived in Hell, executed upon Earth, and punished by Heaven. The parts of it are related in the most distinct manner, and grow out of each other in the most natural order.

The third qualification of an epic poem is, its greatness. The anger of Achilles was of such consequence that it embroiled the kings of Greece, destroyed the heroes of Asia, and enraged all the gods into factions. Æneas's settlement in Italy produced the Cæsars, and gave birth to the Roman empire. Milton's subject was still greater than either of the former; it does not determine the fate of individuals, or nations, but of a whole species. The united powers of Hell are combined for the destruction of mankind, which they effected in part, and would have completed, had not Omnipotence itself interposed. The principal actors are, Man in his greatest perfection, and Woman in her highest beauty. Their enemies are the fallen Angels, the Messiah their friend, and the Almighty their protector. In short, every thing that is great in the whole circle of being, whether within the verge of Nature, or out of it, has a proper part assigned it in this admirable poem.

Aristotle, by the greatness of the action, does not only mean that it should be great in its nature, but also in its duration; or, in other words, that it should have a due length, as well as what we properly call greatness. Homer and Virgil have shown their principal art in this particular; the action of the Iliad, and that of the Æneid, were in themselves exceeding short; but are so beautifully extended and diversified by the invention of episodes, and the intervention of gods, with similar poetical ornaments, that they form an agreeable story, sufficient to employ the memory, without overcharging it. Milton's action is enriched with such a variety of circumstances, that I have taken as much pleasure in reading the Contents of his Books, as in the best invented story I have ever met with. It is possible, that the traditions on which the Iliad and Æneid were founded, could have had more circumstances in them than in the history of the fall of man, as it is related in Scripture: besides, it was easier for Homer and Virgil to dash the truth with fiction, as they were in no danger of offending the religion of their country: but Milton had not only a very few circumstances upon which to raise his poem, but was also obliged to proceed with the greatest caution in every thing

Y I J L R Y :

P O N P O Q U P O N P O Q

A B O N U O D O B O N U O D

A I R Y : : A I R Y : : A I R

: Y I J L R Y : : Y I J L R Y : : Y I J

O N P O Q U P O N P O Q U P O N P O Q

B O N U O D O B O N U O D O B O N U O D

that he added from his own invention. And, notwithstanding all the restraints he was under, he has filled his story with so many surprising incidents, which bear so close analogy with what is delivered in Holy Writ, that it is capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without giving offence to the most scrupulous.

Having examined the action of *Paradise Lost*, let us, in the next place, consider the actors. This is Aristotle's method of arrangement; first, the fable, and secondly, the manners; or, as we generally call them in English, the fable and the characters.

Homer has excelled all the heroic poets, in the multitude and variety of his characters. Every god that is admitted into his poem, acts a part which would have been suitable to no other deity. His princes are as much distinguished by their manners as by their dominions; and even those among them, whose characters seem wholly made up of courage, differ from one another, as to the particular kinds of courage in which they excel. In short, there is scarce a speech, or action, in the *Iliad*, which the reader may not ascribe to the person that speaks or acts, without seeing his name prefixed to it.

Homer does not only outshine all other poets in the variety, but also in the novelty, of his characters. He has introduced among his Grecian princes, a person who had lived in three ages of men, and conversed with Theseus, Hercules, Polyphemus, and the first race of heroes. His principal actor is the son of a goddess, not to mention the offspring of other deities who have likewise a place in his poem, and the venerable Trojan prince, who was the father of so many kings and heroes. There is, in these several characters of Homer, a certain dignity, as well as novelty, which adapts them in a more peculiar manner to the nature of an heroic poem; and, to give them the greater variety, he has described a Vulcan, that is a buffoon, among his gods, and a Thersites among his mortals.

Virgil falls infinitely short of Homer in the characters of his poem, both as to their variety and novelty. *Æneas* is a perfect character; but as for *Achates*, though he is styled the hero's friend, he does not any thing in the whole poem which may deserve that title. *Gyas*, *Mnestheus*, *Sergestus*, and *Cloanthus*, are all of them men of the same character.

-- ----- fortemque *Gyam*, fortemque *Cloanthum*. *Virg.*

There are several very natural incidents in the part of *Ascanius*, as that of *Dido* cannot be sufficiently admired. I do not see any thing new or particular in *Turnus*. *Pallas* and *Evander* are remote copies of *Hector* and *Priam*, as

Lausus and Mezentius are almost parallels to Pallas and Evander. The characters of Nisus and Eurialus are beautiful, but common. We must not forget the parts of Simon, Camilla, and some few others, which are fine improvements on the Greek poet. In short, there is neither that variety nor novelty in the persons of the *Æneid* which we meet with in those of the *Iliad*.

If we look into the characters of Milton, we shall find, that he has introduced all the variety his fable was capable of admitting. The whole species of mankind was in two persons, at the time to which the subject of his poem is confined. We have, however, four distinct characters in these two persons. We see man and woman in the highest innocence and perfection, and in the most abject state of guilt and infirmity. The two last characters are, indeed, very common and obvious; but the two first are not only more magnificent, but more new than any characters, either in Virgil or Homer, or indeed in the whole circle of nature.

Milton was so sensible of this defect in the subject of his poem, and of the few characters it would afford him, that he has brought into it two actors of a shadowy and fictitious nature, in the persons of Sin and Death; by which means, he has introduced into the body of his fable a very beautiful and well-invented allegory: but notwithstanding the fineness of this allegory may atone for it in some measure, I cannot think that persons of such a chimerical existence are proper actors in an epic poem; because there is not that degree of probability annexed to them which is requisite in writings of this kind.

Virgil has admitted Fame as an actress in the *Æneid*; but the part she acts is very short, and the incident none of the most admired in that divine work. We find in mock heroic poems, particularly in the *Dispensary* and the *Lutrin*, several allegorical persons of this nature, which are very beautiful in those compositions, and may perhaps be used as an argument, that the authors of them were of opinion such characters might have a place in an epic work: I should be glad the reader would be of the same opinion for the sake of the poem I am now examining; and must farther add, that if such empty, unsubstantial beings, may be introduced on this occasion, never were any more justly imagined, or employed in more proper actions, than those of which I am now speaking.

Another principal actor, in this poem, is the great enemy of mankind. The part of Ulysses, in Homer's *Odysses*, is very much admired by Aristotle, as varying that fable with very agreeing plots and intricacies, not only by the many adventures in his voyage, and the subtilty of his behaviour,

but by the various concealments and discoveries of his person in several parts of that poem: but the crafty being I have now mentioned, makes a much longer voyage than Ulysses, puts in practice many more wiles and stratagems, and conceals himself under a greater variety of shapes and appearances—all of which are severally detected, to the great delight and surprise of the reader. We may likewise observe with how much art the poet has varied several characters of the persons that speak in his infernal assembly. On the contrary, how has he represented the whole Godhead exerting itself towards man, in its full benevolence, under the three-fold distinction of a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Comforter.

Nor must we omit the person of Raphael, who, amidst his tenderness and friendship for man, shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speech and behaviour, as are suitable to a superior nature. The angels are as much diversified in Milton, and distinguished by their proper parts, as the gods are in Homer or Virgil.

There is another circumstance in the principal actors of the Iliad and Æneid, which gives a peculiar beauty to those two poems, and was therefore contrived with very great judgment; I mean the author's having chosen for their heroes persons so nearly related to the people for whom they wrote. Achilles was a Greek, and Æneas the remote founder of Rome: by this means their countrymen (whom they principally proposed to themselves for their readers) were particularly attentive to all the parts of their story, and sympathised with their heroes in all their adventures. A Roman could not but rejoice in the escapes, successes, and victories of Æneas, and be grieved at any defeats, misfortunes, or disappointments, that befel him; as a Greek must have had the same regard for Achilles: and it is plain, that each of those poems have lost this great advantage among those readers to whom their heroes are strangers or indifferent persons.

Milton's poem is admirable in this respect, since it is impossible for any of its readers, whatever nation, country, or people he may belong to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in it; but what is infinitely more to its advantage, the principal actors in this poem are not only our progenitors, but our representatives.

We have taken a general survey of the fable and characters in Milton's Paradise Lost: the parts which remain to be considered, according to Aristotle's method, are the sentiments and the language. Before I enter upon the first of these, I must inform my reader, that it is my design, as soon as I have finished my general reflections on these four se-

veral heads, to give particular instances from the poem of beauties and imperfections which may be observed under each of them, as also of such other particulars as may not properly fall under any of them. This I thought necessary to premise, that the reader may not judge too hastily of this criticism, or pronounce it imperfect, before he has seen the whole extent of it.

The sentiments, in an epic poem, are the thoughts and behaviour which the author ascribes to the persons whom he introduces, and are just when they are conformable to the characters of the several persons. The sentiments have likewise a relation to things as well as persons, and are perfect when they are such as are adapted to the subject. If, in either of these cases, the poet endeavours to argue or explain, to magnify or diminish, to raise love or hatred, pity or terror, or any other passion, we ought to consider whether the sentiments he makes use of are proper for those ends. Homer is censured by the critics for his defect as to this particular in several parts of the Iliad and Odysey; yet those who have treated this great poet with candour, have attributed this defect to the times in which he lived. It was the fault of the age, and not of Homer, if there wants that delicacy in some of his sentiments which now appears in the works of men of a much inferior genius. Besides, if there are blemishes in any particular thoughts, there is an infinite beauty in the greatest part of them. In short, if there are many poets who would not have fallen into the meanness of some of his sentiments, there are not any who could have risen up to the greatness he has displayed in others. Virgil has excelled all in the propriety of his sentiments. Milton shines likewise very much in this particular: nor must we omit one consideration which adds to his honour and reputation. Homer and Virgil introduced persons whose characters are commonly known, and such as are to be met with either in history or in ordinary conversation. Milton's characters, most of them, lie out of nature, and were to be formed purely by his own invention. It shows a greater genius in Shakespeare to have drawn his Caliban than his Hotspur or Julius Cæsar: the one was to be supplied out of his own imagination, whereas the other might have been formed upon tradition, history, and observation. It was much easier, therefore, for Homer to find proper sentiments for an assembly of Grecian generals, than for Milton to diversify his infernal council with proper characters, and inspire them with a variety of sentiments. The Loves of Dido and Æneus are only copies of what has passed between other persons. Adam and Eve, before the fall, are a different species from that of mankind, who are descended from

them; and none but a poet, of the most unbounded invention, and the most exquisite judgment, could have filled their conversation and behaviour with so many apt circumstances during their state of innocence.

Nor is it sufficient for an epic poem to be filled with such thoughts as are natural, unless it abound also with such as are sublime. Virgil in this particular falls short of Homer. He has not, indeed, so many thoughts that are low and vulgar; but, at the same time, he has not so many thoughts that are sublime and noble. The truth is, Virgil seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments where he is not fired by the Iliad; he every where charms and pleases us by the force of his own genius, but seldom elevates and transports us where he does not borrow his hints from Homer.

Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thought. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets, both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas than those which he has combined in his first, second, and sixth books. The seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, though not so apt to excite emotion in the mind of the reader, nor, consequently, so perfect in the epic way of writing; because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare what Longinus has observed on several passages in Homer, and he will find parallels for most of them in the *Paradise Lost*.

From what has been said we may infer, that as there are two kinds of sentiments, the natural and the sublime, which are always to be pursued in an heroic poem; there are also two kinds which are carefully to be avoided. The first are such as are affected and unnatural, the second such as are mean and vulgar. As for the first kind of thoughts, we meet with few in Virgil; he has none of those trifling points and puerilities that are so often to be met with in Ovid, none of the epigrammatic turns of Lucan, none of those swelling sentiments which are so frequently in Statius and Claudian, or of those mixed embellishments of Tasso.—Every thing is just and natural. His sentiments shew that he had a perfect insight into human nature, and that he knew every thing which was most proper to affect it.

As many thoughts may be natural which are low and groveling, an epic poet should therefore not only avoid such sentiments as are unnatural and affected, but also such as are mean and vulgar. Homer has opened a great field of raillery to men of more delicacy than greatness of genius,

by the homeliness of some of his sentiments; but these are rather to be imputed to the simplicity of the age in which he lived, to which I may also add, of that which he described, than to any imperfection in that divine poet. Zoius, among the ancients, and Monsieur Perrault, among the moderns, indulged in ridicule of such sentiments. There are no blemishes to be observed in Virgil in this particular, and but very few in Milton.

I shall give but one instance of this impropriety in Homer, and at the same time compare it with an instance of the same nature both in Virgil and Milton. Sentiments which raise laughter can very seldom be admitted with any decency into an heroic poem, the business of which is to excite passions of a much nobler nature. Homer, however, in his characters of Vulcan and Thersites, in his history of Mars and Venus, in his behaviour of Irus, and in other passages, has been observed to have lapsed into the burlesque character, and to have departed from that serious air which seems essential to the magnificence of an epic poem. I remember but one laugh in the whole *Æneid*, which is excited in the fifth book, upon Monætes, where he is represented as thrown overboard, and drying himself upon a rock. But this piece of mirth is so well timed, that the severest critic cannot object to it, for it is in the book of games and diversions, where the reader's mind may be supposed to be sufficiently relaxed for such an entertainment. The only piece of pleasantry in *Paradise Lost*, is where the evil spirits are described as rallying the angels upon the success of their new invented artillery. This passage I look upon to be the most exceptionable in the whole poem.

Having already treated of the fable, the characters, and sentiments, in the *Paradise Lost*, we are, in the last place, to consider the language; and as the learned world is very much divided upon Milton as to this point, I hope they will excuse me if I appear particular in any of my opinions, and incline to those who judge he most favourably of the author.

It is requisite that the language of an heroic poem should be both perspicuous and sublime. In proportion as either of these two qualities are wanting, the language is imperfect. Perspicuity is the first and most necessary qualification; insomuch that a candid reader sometimes overlooks a little slip even in the grammar or syntax, where it is impossible for him to mistake the poet's sense. Of this kind is that passage in Milton wherein he speaks of Satan.

----God and his son except,
Created thing nought valu'd he nor shunn'd.

And that in which he describes Adam and Eve:

Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

It is plain that, in the former of these passages, according to the natural syntax, the divine persons mentioned in the first line are represented as created beings; and that in the other, Adam and Eve are confounded with their sons and daughters. Such little blemishes as these, when the thought is great and natural, we should, with Horace, impute to a pardonable inadvertency, or to the weakness of human nature, which cannot attend to each minute particular, and give the finishing touch to every circumstance in so long a work. The ancient critics, therefore, who were actuated by a spirit of candour rather than of cavilling, invented certain figures of speech on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature in the writings of those authors who had so many greater beauties to atone for them.

If clearness and perspicuity were only to be consulted, the poet would have only to clothe his thoughts in the most plain and natural expressions. But since it often happens that the most obvious phrases, and those which are used in ordinary conversation, become too familiar to the ear, and contract a kind of meanness by being used by the vulgar, a poet should take particular care to guard himself against idiomatic ways of speaking. Ovid and Lucan abound with vulgarisms arising from the immediate adoption of low phrases, without scrupulous attention to words best adapted to convey sentiments exalted and sublime, which are so essential to the excellence of an epic poem. Milton has but a few failings of this kind. There are, however, some instances, as in the following passages:

Embrios and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery,
Here pilgrims roam----
-----A while discourse they hold,
No fear lest dinner cool, when thus began
Our Author-----
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me will curse
My head:---ill fare our ancestor impure:
For this we may thank Adam.-----

It is not sufficient that the language of an epic poem be perspicuous, unless it be also sublime. To this end it ought to deviate from the common forms and ordinary phrases of speech. The judgment of a poet very much discovers itself in avoiding the common modes of expression, without falling into such phrases as may seem stiff and unnatural; he must not swell into a false sublime, by endeavouring to avoid the other extreme. Among the Greeks, Æschylus, and sometimes Sophocles, were guilty of this fault; among

the Latins Claudian and Statius; and among our own countrymen, Shakespeare and Lee. In these authors the affectation of greatness often hurts the perspicuity of the style, as in many others the endeavour after perspicuity prejudices its greatness.

Aristotle has observed, that the idiomatic style may be avoided, and the sublime formed, by the following methods: First, by the use of metaphors: such are those in Milton,

Imparadis'd in one another's arms.

-----And in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire-----.

The grassy clods now calv'd-----
Spangled with eyes-----

In these, and innumerable other instances, the metaphors are very bold, but just. I must, however, observe, that the metaphors do not abound in Milton, which always favours too much of wit; that they never clash with one another, which, as Aristotle observes, turns a sentence into a kind of enigma or riddle; and that he seldom has recourse to them where the proper and natural words will do as well.

Another method of raising the language, and giving it a poetical turn, is to make use of the idioms of other languages. Virgil is full of the Greek forms of speech, which the critics call Hellenisms, as Horace, in his odes, abounds with them much more than Virgil. I need not mention the several dialects which Homer has made use of for this end. Milton, in conformity with the practice of the ancient poets, and with Aristotle's rule, has infused a great many Latinisms, as well as Græcisms, and sometimes Hebraisms, in the language of his poem.

Under this head may be ranked the placing the adjective after the substantive, the transposition of words, the turning the adjective into a substantive, with several other foreign modes of speech, which this poet has naturalized, to give his verse the greater sound, and throw it out of prose.

The third method mentioned by Aristotle, is what agrees with the genius of the Greek language more than with that of any other tongue, and is therefore more used by Homer than by any other poet; I mean the lengthening of a phrase by the addition of words which may either be inserted or omitted, as also by the extending or contracting of particular words, by the insertion or omission of certain syllables. Milton has put in practice this method of raising his language, as far as the nature of our tongue will permit, as in the passage before-mentioned, *eremite*, for what is hermit in common discourse, by which method he has given a greater variety to his numbers; but this practice is more particu-

larly remarkable in the names of persons and of countries, as *Beëlzebub*, *Hefebon*, and in many other particulars, wherein he has either changed the name, or made use of that which is not the most commonly known, that he might the better depart from the language of the vulgar. For the sake of the metre, this practice is admissible, but to deviate from what is right, merely from a principle of departing from the vulgar, is ridiculous and absurd. The same reason recommended to him several old words, which also make his poem appear the more venerable, and give it a greater air of antiquity.

I must likewise take notice that there are in Milton several words of his own coining, as *Cerberean*, *mis-created*, *bell-doom'd*, *embryon* atoms, and many others. If the reader is offended at this liberty in our English poet, I would recommend him to a discourse in Plutarch, which shews us how frequently Homer has made use of the same liberty.

Milton, by the above-mentioned aids, and by the choice of the most expressive words and phrases which our tongue would afford him, has carried our language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him, and made the sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments.

I have been more particular in these observations on Milton's style, because it is that part of his work in which he appears the most singular. The remarks I have made upon the practice of other poets, with my observations from Aristotle, will perhaps obviate the prejudice which some have taken to his poem upon this account, yet, I must confess that I think his style, though admirable in general, is in some places too much stiffened and obscured by the frequent use of those methods which Aristotle has prescribed for the raising of it.

This redundancy of those several modes of speech, which Aristotle calls foreign language, and with which Milton has so very much enriched, and in some places obscured, the language of his poem, was the more proper for his use, because his poem is written in blank verse. Rhyme, without any other assistance, throws the language off from prose, and very often makes an indifferent phrase pass unregarded; but where the verse is not formed upon rhymes, there pomp of sound, and energy of expression, are indispensibly necessary to support the style, and keep it from falling into the flatness of prose.

Those who have not a taste for this elevation of style, and are apt to ridicule a poet when he goes out of the common forms of expression, would do well to see how Aristotle has treated an ancient author, called Euclid, for his

insipid mirth upon this occasion. Mr. Dryden used to call this sort of men his prose critics.

I should, under this head of the language, consider Milton's numbers, in which he has made use of several elisions that are not customary among other English poets, as may be particularly observed in his cutting off the letter *Y*, when it precedes a vowel. This, and some other innovations, in the measure of his verse, has varied his numbers in such a manner as renders them incapable of satiating the ear and cloying the reader, which the same uniform measure would certainly have done, and which the perpetual returns of rhyme never fail to do in long narrative poems. I shall close these reflections upon the language of *Paradise Lost*, with observing, that Milton has copied after Homer rather than Virgil, in the length of his periods, the copiousness of his phrases, and the running of his verses into one another.

I have now considered Milton's *Paradise Lost* under these four great heads of the fable, the characters, the sentiments, and the language, and have shewn that he excels, in general, under each of these heads. I hope that I have made several remarks which may appear new, even to those who are versed in critical learning. Were I to choose my readers, by whose judgment I would stand or fall, they should not be such as are acquainted only with the French and Italian critics, but also with the ancient and modern, who have written in either of the learned languages. Above all, I would have them well versed in the Greek and Latin poets, without which a man very often fancies he understands a critic, when in reality he does not comprehend his meaning. Besides, he should have a clear and logical head. Without this talent he is perpetually puzzled and perplexed amidst his own blunders, mistakes the sense of those he would confute, or, if he thinks right, does not know how to convey his thoughts with clearness and perspicuity. Aristotle, who was the best critic, was also one of the best logicians that ever appeared in the world.

One great mark by which you may discover a critic who has neither taste nor learning, is, that he seldom ventures to praise any part of an author's works, which has not been previously applauded by the public, and that his criticism turns wholly upon little faults and errors. This is so very easy to succeed in, that we find many critics, upon the publishing of a new poem, have wit and ill-nature enough to turn several passages of it into ridicule, and very often to their own discredit. This Dryden has very agreeably remarked in those two celebrated lines:

Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls must dive below.

A true critic ought to dwell rather upon excellencies than imperfections, to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and communicate to the world such things as are worth their observation. The most exquisite ideas and language of an author, very often appear the most doubtful and exceptionable to those who want a relish for polite learning; and which a sour undistinguishing critic generally attacks with the greatest violence. Tully observes, that it is very easy to brand or fix a mark upon what he calls *verbum ardens*, or, as it may be rendered into English, a glowing, bold expression, and to turn it into ridicule, by a cold, ill-natured criticism. A little wit is equally as capable of ridiculing a beauty as of aggravating a fault; and though such illiberal treatment naturally produces indignation in the mind of an enlightened reader, it has, however, the reverse effect on many who think that every thing which is laughed at with any mixture of wit is ridiculous in itself.

Such mirth as this, of making a beauty and a blemish equally the subject of derision, is always unseasonable and unjust, as it rather prejudices the reader than convinces him. A man who cannot write with wit on a facetious subject, is dull and stupid; but one who shows it in an improper place, is impertinent and absurd. He who delights in ridicule, is apt to find fault with any thing that gives him an opportunity of exerting his beloved talent, and very often censures a passage, not because there is any fault in it, but because he can be merry upon it. Such pleasantry is very unfair and disingenuous.

As I intend to show the defects in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I thought it necessary to premise these few particulars, that the reader may know I enter upon it as on a very ungrateful work, but I shall point at the imperfections without endeavouring to aggravate them by ridicule. I must also observe, with Longinus, that the productions of a great genius, with many lapses and inadvertencies, are infinitely preferable to the works of an inferior kind of author, which are scrupulously exact, and conformable to all the rules of correct writing.

I shall introduce a remark out of Boccacini, which sufficiently shows us the opinion that judicious author entertained of the critics I have adverted to. "A famous critic, says he, having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat as it had been just threshed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself.

The critic applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and, after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains."

I shall now proceed to comment on the several defects which appear in the fable, the characters, the sentiments and the language of Milton's *Paradise Lost*; not doubting but the reader will pardon any remarks I may suggest in extenuation of defects.

The first imperfection which I shall observe in the fable is, that the event of it is unhappy.

The fable of every poem is, according to Aristotle's division, either simple or implex. It is called simple, when there is no change of fortune in it; implex, when the fortune of the chief actor changes from bad to good, or from good to bad. The implex fable is thought the most perfect; I suppose because it is more proper to excite the passions of the reader, and to surprise him with a greater variety of accidents.

The implex fable is therefore of two kinds. In the first, the chief actor makes his way through a long series of dangers and difficulties, till he arrives at honour and prosperity, as we see in the story of Ulysses. In the second, the chief actor in the poem falls from some high degree of honour and prosperity into misery and disgrace. Thus we see Adam and Eve sinking from a state of innocence and happiness into the most abject condition of sin and sorrow.

The most popular tragedies among the ancients were formed on this last sort of implex fable, particularly the tragedy of Oedipus, which proceeds upon a story, if we may believe Aristotle, the most proper for tragedy that could be invented. This kind of implex fable, wherein the event is unhappy, is more apt to affect an audience than that of the first kind; notwithstanding many excellent pieces among the ancients, as well as most of those which have been written of late years in our own country, are raised upon contrary plans. I must, however, own, that I think this kind of fable, which is the most perfect in tragedy, is not so proper for an heroic poem.

Milton seems to have been sensible of this imperfection in his fable, and has therefore endeavoured to palliate it by several expedients; particularly by the mortification which the great adversary of mankind meets with upon his return to the assembly of infernal spirits, as it is described in a beautiful passage of the tenth book; and likewise by the vision wherein Adam, at the close of the poem, sees his offspring triumphing over his great enemy, and himself restored to a happier paradise than that from which he fell.

There is another objection to Milton's fable, which is almost the same with the former, though placed in a different

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had

light, the hero in the *Paradise Lost* is unsuccessful, and by no means equal to his enemies. This gave occasion to Dryden's reflection, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. The *Paradise Lost* is an epic or a narrative poem, and he that looks for an hero in it, searches for that which Milton never intended; but if the name of an hero is to be applied to any person in it, it is certain the Messiah is the hero, both in the principal action, and in the chief episodes. Paganism could not furnish a real action for a fable greater than that of the *Iliad* or *Æneid*, and therefore an heathen could not form a higher notion of a poem than one of that kind which they call an heroic. Whether Milton's is not of a sublimer nature I will not presume to determine; it is sufficient to show there is in *Paradise Lost* all the greatness of plan, regularity of design, and masterly beauties, which we discover in Homer and Virgil.

I must, in the next place, observe, that Milton has interwoven, in the texture of his fable, some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epic poem, particularly in the actions which he ascribes to Sin and Death, and the picture which he draws of the limbo of vanity, with other passages in the second book. Such allegories rather favour of the spirit of Spenser and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil.

In the structure of this poem, he has likewise admitted of too many digressions. It is observed, by Aristotle, that the author of an heroic poem should seldom speak himself, but advance his ideas through the medium of those who are his principal actors. Aristotle has given no reason for this precept; but I presume it is because the mind of the reader is more awed and elevated when he hears *Æneas* or *Achilles* speak, than when Virgil or Homer speak in their own persons; besides, assuming the character of an eminent man, has a tendency to fire the imagination, and raise the ideas of the author. Tully, mentioning his *Dialogue of Old Age*, in which Cato is the chief speaker, observes, that upon a review of it he was agreeably imposed upon, and fancied that it was Cato, and not himself, who uttered his thoughts upon that subject.

If the reader would be at the pains to observe how the story of the *Iliad* and *Æneid* is delivered by those persons who act in it, he will be surprised to find how little in either of these poems proceeds from the authors: Milton has, in the general disposition of his fable, very accurately observed this great rule; insomuch that there is scarce a third part of it which comes from the poet: the rest is spoken either by Adam and Eve, or by some good or evil spirit, who is engaged either in their destruction or defence.

From what has been here observed, it appears that digressions are by no means to be allowed in an epic poem. If the poet, even in the ordinary course of his narration, was to speak as little as possible, he should certainly never let his narration sleep for the sake of any reflections of his own. I have often observed, with a secret admiration, that the longest reflection in the *Æneid* is in that passage of the tenth book, where Turnus is represented as dressing himself in the spoils of Pallas, whom he had slain. Virgil here suspends his fable for the sake of the following remark; ‘How is the mind of man ignorant of futurity, and unable to bear prosperous fortune with moderation; the time will come when Turnus shall wish that he had left the body of Pallas untouched, and curse the day on which he dressed himself in these spoils.’ As the great event of the *Æneid*, and the death of Turnus, whom *Æneas* slew, because he adorned himself with the spoils of Pallas, turns upon this incident, Virgil deviated from his main subject, to make this reflection upon it, without which so small a circumstance might possibly have escaped his reader’s memory. Lucan, who was an injudicious poet, drops his story very frequently for the sake of his unnecessary digressions, or his *diverticula*, as Scaliger calls them. If he gives us an account of the prodigies which preceded the civil war, he declaims upon the occasion, and shows how much happier it would be for man if he did not feel his evil fortune before it comes to pass, and suffer only by its real weight, not by the apprehension of it.

Milton’s complaint of his blindness, his panegyric on marriage, his reflections on Adam and Eve’s going naked, of the angels eating, and several other passages in his poem, are liable to the same exception; though, I must confess, there is so great a beauty in these very digressions, that I would not wish them out of his poem.

I have already spoken of the characters of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and declared my opinion as to the allegorical persons who are introduced in it.

If we look into the sentiments, I think they are sometimes defective under the following heads. First, as there are several of them too much pointed, and some that degenerate even into puns. Of this last kind, I conceive, is that in the first book, where, speaking of the pigmies, he calls them

----- the small infantry
Warr’d on by cranes-----

Another blemish that appears in some of his thoughts, is his frequent allusion to heathen fables, which are not certainly consonant with the divine subject of which he treats. I do not find fault with these allusions, where the poet him-

self represents them as fabulous, as he does in some places, but where he mentions them as truths and matters of fact.

A third fault in his sentiments is an unnecessary ostentation of learning, which likewise occurs very frequently. It is certain that both Homer and Virgil were masters of all the learning of their times, but it shows itself in their works after an indirect and concealed manner. Milton seems ambitious of discovering, by his excursions on free-will, and predestination, and his many glances upon history, astronomy, geography, and the like, as well as by the terms and phrases he sometimes makes use of, that he was acquainted with the whole circle of arts and sciences.

If, in the last place, we consider the language of this great poet, we must allow, that it is often too much laboured, and sometimes obscured, by obsolete words, transpositions, and foreign idioms. Seneca's objection to the style of a great author, *Riget ejus oratio, nihil in ea placidum, nihil lenè*, is what many critics make to Milton; to which I may farther add, that Milton's sentiments and ideas were so wonderfully sublime, that it would have been impossible for him to have represented them in their full strength and beauty without having recourse to these foreign assistances. Our language sunk under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnished him with such glorious conceptions.

A second fault in his language is, that he often affects a kind of jingle in his words, as in the following passages, and many others:

That brought into this world a world of woe,

----- Begirt th' almighty throne,
Beseeching or besieging -----

This tempted our attempt-----

At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound.

I know there are precedents for this kind of speech; that some of the greatest ancients have adopted it; and that Aristotle himself has given it a place in his Rhetoric, among the beauties of that art; but it is in itself poor and trifling, it is, I think, at present, universally exploded by all the masters of polite writing.

The last defect I shall notice in Milton's style, is the frequent use of what the learned call technical words, or terms of art. It is one of the great beauties of poetry to make hard things intelligible, and to deliver what is abstruse of itself in such easy language as may be understood by ordinary readers: besides that, the knowledge of a poet should rather seem born with him, or inspired, than drawn from books and systems. I have often wondered how Dryde

could translate a passage out of Virgil after the following manner :

Tack to the larboard, and stand off to sea,
Veer starboard sea and land.-----

Milton makes use of larboard in the same manner. When he is upon building, he mentions Doric pillars, pilasters, cornice, frieze, architrave.* When he talks of heavenly bodies, you meet with ecliptic and eccentric, the trepidation, stars dropping from the zenith, rays culminating from the equator. To which might be added many instances of the like kind in several other arts and sciences.

I have seen in the works of a modern philosopher, a map of the spots in the sun. My last observations on faults and blemishes in Milton's Paradise Lost, may be considered as a piece of the same nature. To pursue the allusion; as it is observed, that among the bright parts of the luminous body abovementioned, there are some which glow more intensely and dart a stronger light than others; so, notwithstanding I have already shown Milton's poem to be very beautiful in general, I shall now proceed to take notice of such beauties as appear to me more exquisite than the rest.*

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THE works of inferior geniuses have their infancy, and often receive additions of strength and beauty in the several impressions they undergo whilst their authors live: but the following poem came into the world, like the persons whom it celebrates, in a state of maturity. However, though in the first Edition it was disposed into ten books only, Milton thought proper, in the second, to make a new division of it into twelve; not, we suppose, with respect to the *Æneis*, for he was, in both senses of the phrase, above imitation, but, more probably, because the length of the seventh and tenth required a pause in the narration, he divided them each into two.

The Verse.

THE metre is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of a poem, but the invention of a barbarous age, graced indeed by the use of modern poets, carried away by custom. Rhyme has been rejected by the most eminent Italian and Spanish poets, and long since in the best English tragedies, as, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no musical delight, which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in jingling sounds of similar endings, a fault avoided by learned authors. The neglect of rhyme is so far from being taken as a defect, though it may seem so to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed as the first example set, in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poetry, from the troublesome bondage of rhyming.

* There are other criticisms written by Addison, and inserted in the Spectator, which forms a part of the British Classics.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

The Argument.

THIS First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed; then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan, in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing on his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great Deep. Which action pass'd over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now falling into Hell, describ'd here, not in the centre, (for Heaven and Earth may be suppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accus'd,) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest call'd Chaos! here Satan, with his angels lying on the burning lake thunder-struck and astonish'd, after a certain space recovers as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: they rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders nam'd, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them, lastly, of a new world, and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built, out of the Deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, 5
Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rote out of Chaos: Or if Sion hill 10
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread, 20
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast abyss,

And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

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Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will,
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory 'bove his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the most High,
If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim,
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battle proud
With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chain and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation wast and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round

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As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
 Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
 For those rebellious, here their prison ordain'd
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
 As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns, and weltring by his side
 One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
 Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch Enemy,
 And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:

If thou beest he; but O how fall'n! how chang'd
 From him, who in the happy realms of light, 85
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
 In equal ru'in: into what pit thou seest
 From what height fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent victor in his rage 95
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fixt mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
 That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,

That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
 His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost; th' unconquerable will, 106
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield;
 And what is else not to be overcome;
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath 115
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of Gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
 We may with more successful hope resolve 120
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain, 125
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O prince, O chief of many throned pow'rs,
 That led th' imbattl'd seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130
 Fearless, endanger'd heav'n's perpetual King,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat 135
 Hath lost us heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140
 Though all our glory's extinct, and happy state

Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqu'ror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'er-power'd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire 146
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be, 150
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment? 158
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend reply'd:
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil; 165
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulph'rous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
Perhaps hath spent his shaft, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
The seat of desolation, void of light,

Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there, 185
And re-assembling our afflicted Powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope, 190
If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large, 195
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareus, or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him haply flum'bring on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell, 205
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence 210
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. 220
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool



MILTON.

Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air.
Vide Paradise Lost Vol. I. Book 1. line 225.

His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames
 Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire ;
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thund'ring *Ætna*, whose combustible
 And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke : Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
 Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
 As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
 Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
 That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light ? Be it so, since he 245
 Who now is sov'reign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right : farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewel happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells : Hail horrors, hail 250
 Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
 Receive thy new possessor ; one who brings
 A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heaven, 255
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater ? Here at least
 We shall be free ; th' Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence : 260
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choice

To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
 Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
 Was moving tow'ard the shore; his pond'rous shield,
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, 285
 Behind him cast: the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening from the top of Fesole,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
 He walk'd with to support uneasy steps 295
 Over the burning marle, not like those steps
 On Heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
 Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire:
 Nathless he so indur'd, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
 His legions, angel forms, who lay entranc'd

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Valambrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd embow'r; or scatter'd sedge
Aflote, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Bustis and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded, Princes, potentates, 315
Warriors, th' flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have you chos'n this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?
Or in this abject posture have you sworn
T' adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325
His swift pursuers from Heav'n gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n! 330
They heard and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,

That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile :
 So numberless were those bad angels seen,
 Hovering on wing under the cope of hell, 345
 'Twixt upper, nether, and furrounding fires ;
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain ; 350
 A multitude, like which the pop'lous North
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barb'rous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands. 355
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
 Their great commander ; godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities,
 And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones ; 360
 Though of their names in heavenly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
 By their rebellion from the books of life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve 364
 Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth
 Through God's high suff'rance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and th' invisible
 Glory of him that made them to transform 370
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities :
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the heathen world. 375
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
 Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
 At their great Emp'ror's call, as next in worth
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380
 The chief were those who from the pit of hell

Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide 385
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within its sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their childrens' cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite 396
Worshipt in Rabba and her watry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream,
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Himmon, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd the type of hell. 405
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma, clad with vines, 410
And Eleälé to th' Asphaltic pool,
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd 415
E'en to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide; lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euprates to the brook that parts 420
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names

Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,
 These feminine. For spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure, 425
 Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumb'rous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their airy purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low 435
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Ashtoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd
 Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns;
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood,
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded; the love tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led 455
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel hedge, 460
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers:

Dagon his name, sea monster; upward man,
And downward fish: yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, 465
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also 'gainst the house of God was bold: 470
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods 475
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
Their wand'ring gods, disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd 490
Fell not from Heav'n, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smok'd; yet, who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns Atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when Night, 500
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons

Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape. 505
 These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd:
 Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
 Their boasted parents: Titan, Heav'n's first-born,
 With his enormous brood, and birth-right seiz'd 511
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove
 His own and Rhea's son like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top 515
 Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
 Fled o'er Adria to th' Hesperian fields, 520
 And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
 Down-cast and damp't, yet such wherein appear'd
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
 In loss itself; which on his countenance cast 526
 Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
 Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
 Then strait commands, that at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
 His mighty standard: that proud honor claim'd
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535
 Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
 Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540
 At which the universal host up sent

A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 350
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and instead of rage
Deliberate valor breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat; 555
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts and chase
Anguish and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixed thought 560
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose; he through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battallion, views their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods; 570
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories; for never since created man
Met such embodied force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more than that small infantry 575
Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;

And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric's shore, 585
 When Charlemain, with all his peerage, fell
 By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread Commander: he above the rest,
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590
 Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than Arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
 Of glory obscur'd; as when the Sun new risen
 Looks through the horizontal misty air 595
 Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
 In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
 Above them all th' Arch-angel: but his face 600
 Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion to behold 605
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
 (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
 For ever now to have their lot in pain,
 Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
 Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung 610
 For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
 Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd 615
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.
 Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth: at last 620
 Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.

O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless! but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change, 625
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend,
Self-rais'd, and re-possess their native seat?
For me be witness, all the host of Heav'n, 635
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state 640
Put forth at full; but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650
There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long
Intended to create and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heav'n:
'Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyfs
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd, 660

For who can think submission? War then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze 665
Far round illumin'd Hell: highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance tow'rd the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A numerous brigade hasten'd; as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pick-axe arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From Heav'n, for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than ought divine or holy else enjoy'd
In visions beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily out-done
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil,
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepar'd,

That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Sev'ring each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells,
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
 As in an organ from one blast of wind
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon, out of the earth a fabric huge 710
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave; nor did there want 715
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
 Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately height, and straight the doors
 Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
 Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
 With Naptha and Asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
 And some the architect: his hand was known
 In Heav'n by many a tow'red structure high,
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes, whom the supreme King 735
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740

From Heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crytal battlements: from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star, 745
 On Lemnos, th' Ægean isle: thus they relate,
 Erring: for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now
 To have built in Heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent, 750
 With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

Mean-while the winged heralds, by command
 Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came 760
 Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
 (Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
 Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry 765
 To mortal combat, or career with lance,)
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their pop'lous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters, they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
 Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd 775
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given,
 Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780

Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,
 Whose midnight revels by a forest side
 Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
 Wheels her pale course, they on their mirth and dance
 Intent with jocund music charm his ear;
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
 Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
 Though without number still amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,
 The great seraphic lords and cherubim
 In close recess and secret conclave, sat 795
 A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full. After short silence then,
 And summons read, the great consult began. 798

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

The Argument.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is prefer'd, mention'd before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage, is honour'd and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations led them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are open'd, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
 To that bad eminence; and from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue

Vain war with Heav'n, and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd.

10

Pow'rs and dominions, Deities of Heav'n,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.

15

Me though just right and the fix'd laws of Heav'n
Did first create your leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,
Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loss,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,

20

Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here

25

Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'ers aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,

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35

Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise may speak.

40

He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost

45

PARADISE LOST.

Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse
He reck'd not, and these words thereafter spake. 50

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait 55

The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather choose, 60

Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the tort'rer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear 65

Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels, and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But, perhaps, 70

The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend 75

Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight 80

We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd; what can be worse 85

Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire

Must exercise us, without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour
 Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus,
 We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential; happier far
 Than miserable to have eternal being:
 Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
 On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
 Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.

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105

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than Gods. On th' other side up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
 A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd
 For dignity compos'd and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
 Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
 Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the ear,
 And with persuasive accent thus began:

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125

I should be much for open war, O Peers,
 As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd
 Main reason to persuade immediate war,
 Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
 When he who most excels in fact of arms,
 In what he counsels, and in what excels,
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair,
 And utter dissolution, as the scope
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.

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First, what revenge? the towers of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access 130
Impregnable; oft on the bord'ring deep
In camp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise 135
With blackest insurrection to confound
Heav'n's purest light, yet our great Enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure, 145
To be no more; sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursued and struck 165
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay

Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awak'd should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or from above
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? what if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
 Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185
 Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? he from Heav'n's height
 All these our motions vain sees and derides; 191
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd to suffer here 195
 Chains and these torments? better these than worse
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200
 That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and fear 205
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror: this is now

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Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit 201
His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome 215
Their noxious vapour, or inur'd not feel,
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light: 220
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe. 225

Thus Belial with words cloth'd in reason's garb
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the king of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
Our own right lost: him to unthroned we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us 235
Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme
We overpow'r? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc'd Hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sov'reign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers, 245
Our servile offerings. This must be our task
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid

To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
 Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
 Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable, preferring 255
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of adverse
 We can create, and in what place so'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
 Must'ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please? This desert soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements, these piercing fires 275
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war.—Ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmurs fill'd
 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
 The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
 Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
 Sea-faring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance

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Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: Such applause was heard 290
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pill'ar of state; deep on his front ingraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic, though in ruin: sage he stood 305
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake. 309
Thrones and imperial powr's, offspring of Heav'n,
Ethereal virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and changing style be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless, while we dream, 315
And know not that the king of Heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain 320
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In heighth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden throne in Heaven.

What ! fit we then projecting peace and war ?
War hath determin'd us, and toil'd with loss 330
Irreparable ; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or sought ; for what peace will be given
To us inflav'd, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted ? and what peace can we return, 335
But to our pow'r hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqu'ror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel ? 340
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dang'rous expedition to invade
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise ? There is a place, 345
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
Err not) another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more 350
Of him who rules above ; so was his will
Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould, 355
Or substance, how indued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtilty. Though Heav'n be shut,
And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd, 360
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it : here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset, either with Hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess 365
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants, or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God

May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss, 375
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence, 380
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves 385
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate, 390
Synod of gods, and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence with neighb'ring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance 396
Re enter Heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light
Secure, and at the brightning orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air, 400
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss, 405
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings.

Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle? what strength, what art can then 410
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries and stations thick
 Of angels watching round? Here he had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send, 415
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat: and expectation held
 His looks suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second, or oppose, or undertake,
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
 Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In others count'nance read his own dismay
 Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
 Of those Heav'n-warring champions, could be found
 So hardy as to proffer or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchical pride
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd, thus spake:

O progeny of heav'n! empyreal thrones! 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
 And hard, that out of hell leads up to light;
 Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round 435
 Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant,
 Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
 These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential Night receives him next
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
 Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers! 445
 And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd
 With splendor, arm'd with pow'r, if ought propos'd
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape

Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty Powers,
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad,
Through all the coasts of dark Destruction, seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise 465
None shall partake with me. Thus saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply,
Prudent, lest from his resolution rais'd
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd; 470
And so refus'd, might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose; 475
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow'rd's him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heav'n:
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd 480
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds

Ascending, while the North-wind sleeps o'erspread
Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element 490

Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip inow, or shower;

If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet

Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,

The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds

Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495

O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd

Firm concord holds; men only disagree

Of creatures rational, though under hope

Of heav'nly grace; and God proclaiming peace,

Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500

Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,

Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:

As if (which might induce us to accord)

Man had not hellish foes enow besides,

That day and night for his destruction wait. 505

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth

In order came the grand infernal Peers:

Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd

Alone th' antagonist of Heav'n, nor less

Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme, 510

And god-like imitated state; him round

A globe of fiery seraphim inclos'd

With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.

Then of their session ended they bid cry

With trumpets' regal sound the great result: 515

Tow'rd the four winds four speedy cherubim

Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy

By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow abyss

Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell 519

With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers

Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way

Pursues, as inclination or sad choice

Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find

Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain 526

The irksome hours, till his great chief return.

Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,

Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields. 530
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form,
As when to warn proud cities war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van 535
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that Fate 550
Free virtue should inthral to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment 554
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense)
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, 560
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565
Yet with a pleasing forcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast

With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud,
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon, 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watry labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
 Thither, by harpy-footed furies hal'd, 596
 At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
 Are brought, and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,

All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But Fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610

Medusa, with Gorgonian terror, guards

The ford; and of itself the water flies

All taste of living wight, as once it fled

The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on 614

In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands,

With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,

View'd first their lamentable lot, and found

No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale

They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,

O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of

A universe of death, which God by curse [death,

Created evil, for evil only good,

Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625

Abominable, inutterable, and worse

Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Mean while the adversary of God and Man,

Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of high'st design, 630

Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of Hell

Explores his solitary flight; sometimes

He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left,

Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars

Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high. 635

As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd

Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds

Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles

Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring

Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood 640

Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape

Ply stemming nightly towards the Pole. So seem'd

Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear

Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,

And thrice three-fold the gates; three folds were brass,

Three iron, three of adamantine rock, 646

Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,

Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat

On either side a formidable shape ;
 The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair, 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting : about her middle round
 A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark 654
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
 A hideous peal ; yet, when they list, would creep,
 If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd
 Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
 Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts 660
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore :
 Nor uglier follow the Night-hag, when call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape, 666
 If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either ; black it stood as Night, 670
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart ; what seem'd his head
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand ; and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast 675
 With horrid strides ; Hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd ;
 Admir'd, not fear'd ; God and his son except,
 Created thing nought valued he nor shunn'd ;
 And with disdainful look thus first began : 680
 Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates ? Through them I mean to pass,
 That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee. 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of Heav'n.
 To whom the goblin, full of wrath, reply'd :

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COOK'S EDITION OF SELECT POETS.



MILTON.

THE FALL OF MAN. HIS ORIGIN, CAUSE, AND
PUNISHMENT. See Hell, l. 100. In the book
Vide Paradise Lost Vol. I. Book 2. line 875.

Designed by T. Hook

Printed for C. Bayly, Broad Street, No. 20. 1795.

Engraved by W. Baskett.

Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he
 Who first broke peace in Heav'n and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms 691
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's sons
 Conjur'd against the Highest, for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of Heav'n,
 Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
 Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings, 700
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threatening, grew ten-fold 705
 More dreadful and deform: On th' other side,
 Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
 Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend; and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
 With Heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front 716
 Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air:
 So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
 Grew darker at their frown, so match'd they stood;
 For never but once more was either like 721
 To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky sorcerers that sat
 Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
 Against thy only son? What fury, O Son,

Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head ? and know'st for whom ;
 For him who sits above, and laughs the while 731
 At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids ;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
 Forbore ; then these to her Satan return'd :

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
 Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends ; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double form'd, and why
 In this infernal vale, first met, thou call'st
 Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my Son :
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him and thee. 745

T' whom thus the portress of Hell gate reply'd :
 Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul ? once deem'd so fair
 In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
 Of all the seraphim with thee combin'd 750
 In bold conspiracy 'gainst Heav'n's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain
 Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide, 755
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd
 Out of thy head I sprung : amazement seiz'd
 All th' host of Heav'n ; back they recoil'd, afraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign 760
 Portentous held me ; but familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
 Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burden. Mean while war arose,
 And fields were fought in Heav'n ; wherein remain'd

(For what could else?) to our almighty Foe
 Clear victory, to our part loss and rout 770
 Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heav'n, down
 Into this deep, and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this powerful key
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass,
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780
 At last this odious offspring, whom thou seest
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy 785
 Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal dart,
 Made to destroy; I fled, and cry'd out Death;
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back resounded Death.
 I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems, 790
 Inflam'd with lust than rage) and swifter far,
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd,
 And in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingendring with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry 795
 Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me; for when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth 800
 Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour 805
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
 Sould prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,

Whenever that shall be ; so Fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O Father, I forewarn thee, shun
 His deadly arrow ; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heav'nly ; for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

810

She finish'd ; and the subtle Fiend his lore
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth :
 Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy fire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
 Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of ; know

815

821

I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
 Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
 Fell with us from on high : from them I go
 This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of Heav'n, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd
 Left Heav'n, surcharg'd with potent multitude,
 Might hap to move new broils : be this, or ought
 Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
 To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
 With odors ; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
 Immeasurably ; all things shall be your prey.

825

830

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840

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine should be fill'd, and blest his maw

846

Destin'd to that good hour : no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her fire :

The key of this infernal pit, by due, 850
And by command of Heav'n's all pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates : against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855

But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of heav'n, and heav'nly born, 860
Here in perpetual agony and pain,

With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed ?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me ; whom should I obey 865

But thee, whom follow ? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right-hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870

Thus, saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took ;
And tow'rd the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers 875

Could once have mov'd ; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock, with ease
Unfastens : on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound, 880

Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r ; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host 885

Under spread ensign marching might pass through,
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array ;

So wide they stood, and like a furnace' mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
 The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth and height,
 And time, and place, are lost? where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyren's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
 He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray
 By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds:
 Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,
 Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd 920
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
 With all her battering engines, bent to raze
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements 925
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans

He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground ; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
Audacious ; but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity : all unawares,
Fluttering his pinions vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 735
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft : that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land : nigh founde'r'd, on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot, 941
Half flying ; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspiā, who by stealth 945
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold ; so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
At length a universal hubbub wild, 951
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence : thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power 955
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord'ring on light ; when strait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavillion spread 960
Wide on the wasteful deep ; with him enthron'd
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign ; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Damogorgon : Rumour next and Chance, 965
And Tumult and Confusion, all embroil'd,
And Discord, with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus : Ye Powers
 And Spirits of this nethermost abyfs,
 Chaos, and ancient Night, I come no spy, 970
 With purpose to explore, or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
 Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with Heav'n ; or if some other place,
 From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound ; direct my course : 980
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
 To her original darkness and your sway,
 (Which is my present journey,) and once more 985
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night :
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan ; and him thus the Anarch old,
 With fault'ring speech and visage incompos'd,
 Answer'd : I know thee, Stranger, who thou art,
 That mighty leading angel, who of late 990
 Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrow'd.
 I saw and heard ; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
 Confusion worse confounded ; and Heav'n gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence ; if all I can will serve
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
 Weak'ning the sceptre of old Night : first Hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath ;
 Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain 1005
 To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell :
 If that way be your walk, you have not far :

So much the nearer danger ; go and speed ;
Havock and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.

He ceas'd ; and Satan stay'd not to reply, 1010
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd,
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round 1015
Eviron'd wings his way ; harder beset,
And more endanger'd, that when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks :
Or when Ulysses on the larbord shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labour hard 1021
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour he ;
But he once past, soon after when Man fell,
Strange alteration ! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way 1026
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length
From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world ; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro 1031
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now, at last, the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night 1036
A glimmering dawn ; here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
As from her utmost works a broken foe
With tumult less, and with less hostile din, 1040
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn ;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 1045
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th' empyreal Heav'n extended wide

In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
 With opal tow'rs and battlements adorn'd
 Of living saphir, once his native seat ;
 And fast by hanging in a golden chain
 This pendant world, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
 Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd, and in a curst hour he hies.

1050

1055

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

The Argument.

GOD sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created ; shows him to the Son who sat at his right-hand ; foretells the success of Satan in perverting Mankind ; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withstood his Tempter ; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduc'd. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man ; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice ; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore, with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man : The Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth ; commands all the angels to adore him ; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb ; where wandering he first finds a place, since call'd the Limbo of Vanity ; what persons and things fly up thither ; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, describ'd ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it : his passage thence to the orb of the sun ! he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb ; but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel ; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and Man, whom God hath plac'd here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed ; alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam,
 May I express thee unblam'd ? Since God is light,
 And never but in unapproach'd light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
 Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell ? before the sun,
 Before the Heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice

5

Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
 Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt,
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath,
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyras, and blind Mæonides,
 And Tyresias, and Phineus, prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n and morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
 Presented with an universal blank
 Of Nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd;

And Wisdom, at one entrance, quite shut out. 50

So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the Mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now, had th' Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean, where he sits
High-thron'd above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works, and their works, at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of Heaven 60
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first Parents, yet the only two 65
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament, 75
Uncertain which, in ocean, or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein, past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:

Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage 80
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss,
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way,
Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly tow'rd's the new created world,

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And Man there plac'd, with purpose to assay
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
 For Man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all th' etherial powers
 And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
 Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had serv'd Necessity,
 Not me? They, therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination over-rul'd
 Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree
 Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
 So without least impulse, or shadow of fate,
 Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all
 Both what they judge, and what they chuse; for so
 I form'd them free, and free they must remain
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall,
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,

Self-tempted, self-deprav'd : Man falls, deceiv'd 130
 By th' other first : Man, therefore, shall find grace ;
 The other none : in mercy and justice both,
 Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory excel,
 But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus, while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
 All Heav'n, and in the blessed sp'rits elect 136
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd :

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious ; in him all his Father shone
 Substantially express'd ; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,

Love without end, and without measure grace,
 Which utt'ring thus, he to his Father spake :

O Father ! gracious was that word which clos'd
 Thy sov'reign sentence, that Man should find grace ;
 For which both heav'n and earth shall high extol 146

Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Incompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.

For should Man finally be lost, should Man, 150

Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd

With his own folly ? that be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine ? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,

Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell 160

Draw after him the whole race of Mankind,

By him corrupted ? or wilt thou thyself

Abolish thy creation, and unmake

For him what for thy glory thou hast made ?

So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd :

O Son, in whom my soul has chief delight,

Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone



Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense a prospect wide
And various
The Milton Vol. I Book 5 Page 86
Painted by T. Kirk Engraved by J. Sachwell
Engraved by H. Miller for C. Cooke Jan. 1. 1801.

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed :
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsaf'd ; once more I will renew 175
 His laps'd powers, though forfeit and inthrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires ;
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
 His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
 Elect above the rest ; so is my will :
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites ; for I will clear their senses dark
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
 To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
 And I will place within them, as a guide,
 My umpire Conscience, whom, if they will hear, 195
 Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 This, my long suff'rance, and my day of grace,
 They who neglect and scorn shall never taste ;
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall ;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done ; Man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heav'n, 205
 Affecting Godhead, and so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,
 But to destruction, sacred and devote,
 He, with his whole posterity, must die ;

Die he, or Justice must; unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say, heav'nly Powers, where shall we find such love?
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save? 215
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,
 And silence was in Heav'n: on Man's behalf
 Patron, or intercessor, none appear'd,
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now, without redemption, all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
 Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
 Atonement for himself or offering meet,
 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring: 235
 Behold me then; me for him, life for life
 I offer; on me, let thine anger fall;
 Account me Man; I, for his sake, will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
 Well pleas'd; on me let Death wreck all his rage;
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long
 Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due, 245
 All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 For ever with Corruption there to dwell;

But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
 My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
 I through the ample air, in triumph high,
 Shall lead Hell captive maugre Hell, and show 255
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
 Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave:
 Then with the multitude of my redeem'd 260
 Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
 And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 265

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
 All Heav'n what this might mean, and whither tend
 Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd:

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
 Found out for Mankind under wrath, O thou 275
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
 To me are all my works, nor Man the least,
 Though last created; that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right-hand, to save,
 By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost. 280
 Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join;
 And be thyself Man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,
 By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room 285
 The head of all Mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd; without thee none.

His crime makes guilty all his sons ; thy merit 290
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd and die, 295
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying 305
Godlike fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good, 210
Far more than great or high ; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne ;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign, 315
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed Universal King ; all power
I give thee ; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits ; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, Princedoms, Pow'rs, Dominions, I reduce ;
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide 320
In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning arch-angels to proclaim 325
Thy dread tribunal ; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.

Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean-while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long 336
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
For regal scepter then no more shall need, 340
God shall be all in all. But all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.
No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout 345
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy, Heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast 351
Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast, by the tree of Life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence 355
To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows;
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of Life,
And where the river of Bliss through midst of Heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade the spirits elect 360
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd,
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side 366
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet,
Of charming symphony, they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;

No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370
Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.

Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible 375

Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
Yet dazzle Heav'n, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.

The next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, th' almighty Father shines, 386

Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory 'bides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He Heav'n of Heav'ns, and all the pow'rs therein,
By thee created, and by thee drew down 391

Th' aspiring Dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angles disarray'd. 399

Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man: him through their malice fall'n, 400

Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son.

Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd, 405
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of Mercy and Justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die

For Man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail! Son of God, Saviour of Men, thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my Song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin. 415

Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean-while, upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs inclos'd 420
From Chaos and th' inroad of Darknes old,
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless expos'd, and ever-threatening storms 425
Of Chaos blust'ring round inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heav'n,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field, 430
As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams, 436
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where the Chinese drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land the Fiend 440
Walk'd up and down alone bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeless to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aerial vapours flew 445
Of all things transitory and vain, when Sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,

Or happiness in this or th' other life ; 450
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
 All th' unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd, 456
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here,
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd ;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated saints, or middle spirits hold,
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
 Hither, of ill join'd sons and daughters born,
 First from the ancient world those giants came
 With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd :
 The builders next of Babel on the plain 466
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build :
 Others came single ; he who, to be deem'd
 A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames, 470
 Empedocles ; and he who, to enjoy
 Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
 Cleombrotus ; and many more too long,
 Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
 White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery. 475
 Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
 In Golgotha him dead who lives in Heav'n ?
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd ; 480
 They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
 And that chrySTALLINE sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd ;
 And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485
 Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo,
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air ; then might ye see

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Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost 490
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgencies, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste 500
His travell'd steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heav'n, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace gate, 505
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of Heav'n. 515
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
Viewless: and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd 520
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after times

Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
 Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood, 535
 To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair 540
 That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven's gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
 Through dark and desert ways, with peril gone,
 All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn 545
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis,
 With glist'ring spires, and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
 Such wonder seiz'd, though after Heaven seen,
 The spirit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
 Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood 555
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of Night's extended shade) from eastern point
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond th' horizon; then from pole to pole 560
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause
 Down right into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,

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Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there 570
He stay'd not to inquire: above them all
The golden sun in splendor likest Heav'n
Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
Or longitude,) where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they, as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part,
With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
Shoots invisible virtue e'en to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which, perhaps,
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with ought on earth, metal or stone,
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing ir'n with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, or the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that which here below 600
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Portable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,

Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 610
Here in the dark, so many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare!
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630
To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,
His Journey's end and our beginning woe.
But first, he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay: 635
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd:
Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright, 645
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and strait was known
Th' arch-angel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,

Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
That run through all the heav'ns, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:

Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655

The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest, by supreme decree,
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 660
To visit oft this new creation round;

Unspeakable desire to see and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favor, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
Hath brought me from the choirs of cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,

But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell; 670
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,

On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
The universal Maker we may praise,

Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of men,
To serve him better: wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd:
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone, 684

By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth:
And oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguil'd,

Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
The sharpest sighted spirit of all in heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
In his uprightness answer thus return'd:
Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, 700
Contented with report, hear only in heav'n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend 705
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw, when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar 710
Stood rul'd, stood vast Infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire; 715
And this ethereal quintessence of heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of Man, that light
His day, which else as th' other hemisphere 725
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid heav'n,

With borrow'd light her countenance triform
 Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735
 Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
 As to superior spirits is wont in Heav'n,
 Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and tow'rd the coast of earth beneath,
 Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
 Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
 Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights. 742

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

The Argument.

SATAN now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of Life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described: Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve: his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of Knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them awhile, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a sunbeam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escap'd the deep, and pass'd at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered afterwards by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower describ'd; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel, by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
 Th' Apocalyps heard cry in heav'n aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now

While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
 The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
 Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down
 The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to hell:
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth 15
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him; for within him hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step no more than from himself can fly
 By change of place: now Conscience wakes Despair
 That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be, 25
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes tow'rds heav'n, and the full blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower: 30
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began:
 O Thou, that with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call, 35
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40
 Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King:
 Ah, wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none: nor was his service hard. 45

What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I deign'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
And understood not that a grateful mind 55
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd; what burden then?
O had his powerful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd 60
Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what t'accuse,
But heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70
Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell; 75
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85

Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
 With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd, 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery; such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent, and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state; how soon 94
 Would height recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feign'd submission swore? ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void:
 For never can true reconciliation grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep;
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace:
 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead 105
 Of us out-cast exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear;
 Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
 Evil be thou my good; by thee at least 110
 Divided empire with Heav'n's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
 As Man ere long and this new world shall know.
 Thus, while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice chang'd with pale ire, envy, and despair;
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld. 117
 For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooch'd with outward calm,
 Artificer of fraud: and was the first 121
 That practis'd falshood under faintly show,
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
 Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
 Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursu'd him down

The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then, alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides 135
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd; and over head up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and as the ranks ascend 140
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung;
Which to our general sight gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring round: 145
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd: 149
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath shower'd the earth: so lovely seem'd
That landskip: and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabeian odors from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:

So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend 166
 Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Medea post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that pass'd that way:
 One gate there only was, and that look'd east
 On the other side; which when th' arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd, and, in contempt, 180
 At one flight bound high overleap'd all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
 In hurdled cots amid the field secure, 186
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
 Thence up he flew, and on the tree of Life,
 The midde tree and highest there that grew, 195
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
 Of immortality. So little knows 201
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views, 205

To all delight of human sense expos'd
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A heav'n on earth : for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line 210
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings.
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar : in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd ; 215
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste ;
And all amid them stood the tree of Life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold ; and next to Life, 220
Our death, the tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd ; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mound high rais'd 226
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden ; thence united fell 230
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account ; 235
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that saphir fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245

Imbrown'd the noontide bow'rs : thus was this place
 A happy rural seat of various view ;
 Groves, whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm ;
 Others, whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
 Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste :
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
 Or palmy hilloc ; or the flow'ry lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store, 255
 Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose :
 Another side, umbrageous grotts and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant ; mean while murm'ring waters fall 260
 Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their choir apply : airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on th' eternal Spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine, gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis 270
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle, 275
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
 Hid Amalthea and her florid son,
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye ;
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, 280
 Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend 285

Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all, 290
And worthy seem'd ; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure ;
(Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,)
Whence true authority in men ; though both 295
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd ;
For contemplation he and valor form'd ;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;
He for God only, she for God in him :
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
Absolute rule ; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad :
She as a veil down to the slender waste
Her unadorned golden tresses wore 305
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd ;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of Nature's works ; honor dishonourable !
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life, his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence !
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill ; 320
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in Love's embraces met ;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325

Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side
 They sat them down; and after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labour then suffic'd
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers:
 The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind 335
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
 All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambol'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant 345
 To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His breaded train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
 To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
 Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose: 355
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad:
 O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born, perhaps, 360
 Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace 364
 The Hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.

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Ah, gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe ;
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy :
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd 370
Long to continue, and this high seat your heav'n
Ill fenc'd for heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd ; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied : league with you I seek, 375
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth ; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
Accept, your Maker's work ; he gave it me, 380
Which I as freely give ; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings ; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring : if no better place 385
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
By conq'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.
So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unesp'y'd 399
To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action mark'd : about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare ;
Then, as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft 405

His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
 To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
 Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow. 410

Sole partner, and sole part of all these joys,
 Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
 That made us, and for us this ample world,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite; 415

That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Ought whereof he hath need, he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 420

This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only tree
 Of Knowledge, planted by the tree of Life;
 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is, 425

Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left,
 Among so many signs of power and rule
 Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given 430

Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights: 435

But let us ever praise him, and extol
 His bounty, following our delightful task
 To prune these growing plants: and tend these flowers,
 Which were it toilsome yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd: O thou for whom 440
 And from whom I was form'd flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him, indeed, all praises owe,
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy 445

So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455
Pure as th' expanse of heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd;
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me: What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
Thy coming and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of Human Race. What could I do, 475
But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platane; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild, 479
Than that smooth watry image; back I turn'd;
Thou following cry'd aloud, Return, fair Eve;
Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485

Henceforth an individual solace dear ;
 Part of my soul I seek thee and thee claim
 My other half ; with that thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine ; I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general Mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
 On our first Father ; half her swelling breast 495
 Naked met his under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid : he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flow'rs ; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure : aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd :

Sight hateful, sight tormenting ! thus these two
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms, 506
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss : while I to hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least, 510
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.

Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From their own mouths : all is not theirs it seems ;
 One fatal tree there stands of knowledge call'd
 Forbidden them to taste : knowledge forbidden ? 515
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
 Envy them that ? can it be sin to know ?

Can it be death ? and do they only stand
 By ignorance ? is that their happy state,
 The proof of their obedience and their faith ? 520

O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin ! Hence I will excite their minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt 525



Both of her beauty and submissive charms
He in delight
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles
Paradise Lost, Vol. I. Book 4. line 497. Page 126.
Designed by W. H. Brown. Engraved by J. G. Kneller.
Printed for C. Cooke, July 1803.

Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first, with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd; 529
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring spirit of heav'n by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while you may,
Yet, happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. 535

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Thro' wood, thro' waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Mean while in utmost longitude, where heav'n
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night; 550
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarm'd youth of heav'n, but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555

On a sun beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste: 560
Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.

This day, at height of noon, came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565

More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
 God's latest image : I describ'd his way
 Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gate ;
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd :
 Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him : one of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the Deep, to raise
 New troubles ; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd :
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,
 See far and wide : in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580
 Well known from heav'n ; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence : if spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'er-leap'd these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he ; and Uriel to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
 Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n 590
 Beneath th' Azores ; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift had thither roll'd
 Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,
 By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there 595
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.
 Now came still Evening on, and Twilight grey
 Had in her sober livery all things clad ;
 Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were flunk, all but the wakeful nightingale ;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung ;
 Silence was pleas'd : now glow'd the firmament
 With living saphirs : Hesperus, that led 605

The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve: Fair consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest, 611
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines 613
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle unemploy'd, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of heav'n on all his ways; 620
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.

To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With fresh approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform 625
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth, 631
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorn'd:
My author and disposer, what thou bidst 635
Unargued I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth 645

After soft show'rs ; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild ; then silent night
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train :
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650
 With charm of earliest birds ; nor rising sun
 On this delightful land ; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glist'ring with dew ; nor fragrance after show'rs ;
 Nor grateful evening mild ; nor silent night
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by noon, 655
 Or glitt'ring star-light, without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these ? for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes ?

To whom our general ancestor reply'd :
 Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
 These have their course to finish round the earth
 By morrow evening, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise ;
 Lest total Darkness should by night regain 665
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In Nature and all things, which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence, foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night, 674
 Shine not in vain ; nor think, though men were none,
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise :
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep :
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night : how often from the steep 680
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to others note,
 Singing their great Creator ? oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,

With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds 686
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heav'n.

Thus talking, hand in hand along they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r; it was a place 690
Chos'n by the sov'reign Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side 695
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic: under foot the violet, 700
Crocus and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bow'r 705
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With flow'rs, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed, 710
And heav'nly choirs the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our Sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like 715
In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day, 725

Which we in our appointed work employ'd
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. 735

This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r
 Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
 Strait side by side were laid; nor turn'd I ween
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
 Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
 Whatever hypocrites austere talk
 Of purity, and place, and innocence, 745
 Defaming as impure what God declares
 Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker bids increase: who bids abstain
 But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?
 Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source 750
 Of human offspring, sole propriety
 In Paradise of all things common else,
 By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men
 Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
 Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760
 Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile

Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
 Casual fruition ; nor in court amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
 Blest Pair ; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775

Now had Night measur'd, with her shadowy cone,
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the cherubim,
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
 To their night watches in warlike parade, 780
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake :

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch ; these other wheel the north ;
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785

From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge :

Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
 Search through this Garden, leave unsearch'd no nook ;
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps, asleep, secure of harm.

This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
 Hitherward bent, (who could have thought ?) escap'd
 The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt : 795

Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon ; these to the bow'r direct
 In search of whom they sought : him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800

Assaying, by his devilish art, to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams ;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint.

Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise 805

Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.

Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his spear 810

Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure

Touch of celestial temper, but returns

Of force to its own likeness: up he starts

Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark

Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815

Fit for the tun some magazine to store

Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain

With sudden blaze diffus'd inflames the air:

So started up in his own shape the fiend.

Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd 820

So sudden to behold the grisly king;

Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon:

Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to hell

Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd, 825

Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,

Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,

Know ye not me? ye knew me once, no mate

For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:

Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830

The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,

Why ask ye, and superfluous begin

Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephon, answer'ing scorn with scorn:

Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same, 835

Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,

As when thou stood'st in heav'n upright and pure;

That glory then, when thou no more wast good,

Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now

Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840

But come, for thou be sure shalt give account

To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep

This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,

Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845

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Invincible; abash'd the devil stood,
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
 His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
 Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,
 Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
 Will save us trial what the least can do 855
 Single against the wicked, and thence weak.

The fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
 But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
 Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
 He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860
 His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
 The western point, where those half rounding guards
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
 Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
 Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud: 865

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
 Hastening this way, and now by glimpse discern
 Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
 And with them comes a third of regal port,
 But faded splendour wan; who, by his gate 870
 And fierce demeanour, seems the Prince of Hell,
 Not likely to part hence without contest;
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd;
 And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875
 How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
 Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
 To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
 Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
 By thy example, but have power and right
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;
 Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?
 To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow: 885

Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
 And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
 Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no
 doubt, 890

And boldly venture to whatever place
 Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight; which in this place I sought;
 To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
 But evil hast not try'd: and wilt object
 His will who bound us? let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd,
 The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
 But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
 Disdainfully half smiling thus reply'd;
 O loss of one in heav'n to judge of wise,
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905
 And now returns him from his prison 'scap'd,
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise,
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
 Unlicenc'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
 However, and to 'scape his punishment.
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incur'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915
 Can equal anger infinite provok'd.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou then they
 Less hardy to endure? courageous chief, 920
 The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alledg'd
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern:

Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
 Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before,
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves
 From hard assays and ill successes past
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
 I therefore, I alone first undertook
 To wing the desolate abyſs, and spy
 This new created world, whereof in hell
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
 Better abode, and my afflicted powers
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
 Though for possession put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.
 To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd:
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power supreme?
 And thou, fly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
 Heav'n's awful monarch? wherefore but in hope
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark, what I arreer thee now. Avant;
 Fly thither whence thou fledst; if from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,

Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facil gates of hell, too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, reply'd :

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970
 Proud liminary cherub; but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
 In progress through the road of heav'n star pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends

Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands
 Left on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On t'other side Satan alarm'd 985
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd :

His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp 989
 What seem'd both spear and shield: now dreadful
 deeds

Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of Heav'n, perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wreck, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995

Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air 1000
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms; in these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;

The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st
mine, 1006

Neither our own, but giv'n; what folly then
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
Than heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: for poof look up, 1010
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,

Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how
weak,

If thou resist. The fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled 1014
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of Night.

THE END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

The Argument.

MORNING approach'd, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day labours; their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God to render Man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance describ'd, his coming discern'd by Adam a far off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise, got together by Eve: their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy! relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof: how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the North, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel, a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

NOW Morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was aery light from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan, 6
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song

Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest: he on his side
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice 15
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake,
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How Nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake:

O Sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night 30
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: Methought 35
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine; it said,
Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
Tunes sweetest his love labour'd song; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things, in vain,
If none regard; Heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire? 45
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.

I rose as at thy call, but found thee not ;
To find thee I directed then my walk ;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree 51
Of interdicted knowledge : fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day :
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heav'n 55
By us oft seen ; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia ; on that tree he also gaz'd ;
And O ! fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor Man ? is knowledge so despis'd ? 60
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste ?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good, why else set here ?
This said, he paus'd not, but with ventrous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted ; me damp horror chill'd 65
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold :
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men : 70
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The Author not impair'd, but honour'd more ?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also ; happy though thou art, 75
Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be :
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see 80
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
E'en to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd ; the pleasant savory smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld

The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various : wond'ring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation, suddenly 90
My guide was gone, and I, methought sunk down,
And fell asleep ; but O how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream ! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad :

Best image of myself and dearer half, 95
The troubles of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally ; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear :
Yet evil whence ? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief ; among these fancy next
Her office holds ; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, aery shapes, 105
Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion ; then retires
Into her private cell when Nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes 110
To imitate her ; but misjoining shapes,
Wild works produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
Some such resemblances methink I find
Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream, 115
But with addition strange ; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
No spot or blame behind, which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene
Than when fair Morning first smiles on the world ;
And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers

That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall 130

From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;

Two other precious drops, that ready stood,

Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell

Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse

And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

/ So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.

But first, from under shady arb'rous roof,

Soon as they forth were come to open sight

Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up risen,

With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140

Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,

Discovering in wide landskip all the east

Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,

Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began

Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145

In various style; for neither various style

Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise

Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung

Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence

Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,

More tuneable than needed lute or harp 151

To add more sweetness; and they thus began:

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,

Almighty, thine this universal frame,

Thus wondrous fair! thyself how wondrous then!

Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heav'ns 157

To us invisible, or dimly seen

In these thy lowest works; yet these declare

Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160

Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs

And choral symphonies, day without night,

Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heav'n,

On earth join all ye creatures to extol

Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

Fairest of stars, last in the train of night, 166

If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st
With the fix'd stars fix'd in their orb that flies, 176
And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise 185
From hill or streaming lake, dusky or grey,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers. 190
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow 195
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living souls: ye birds,
That singing up to heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise,
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail! universal Lord, be bounteous still 205
To give us only good; and if the night

Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark./

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm. 210

On to their morning's rural work they haste
Among sweet dewes and flow'rs : where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces : or they led the vine 215

To wed her elm ; she spous'd about him twines
Her marriagable arms, and with her brings
Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd 221

To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
His marriage with the sev'n-times-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
Satan, from hell 'scap'd through the darksome gulph,
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd 226

This night the human pair, how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.

Go, therefore, half this day, as friend with friend,
Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230

Thou find'st him, from the heat of noon retir'd,
To respite his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose : and such discourse bring on
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will, 235

Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable ; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not too secure ; tell him withal
His danger, and from whom ; what enemy,
Late fall'n himself from heav'n, is plotting now 240

The fall of others from like state of bliss ;
By violence ? no, for that shall be withstood ;
But by deceit and lies : this let him know,
Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
 After his charge receiv'd; but from among
 Thousand celestial ardors, where he stood 249
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light,
 Flew through the midst of heav'n; th' angelic choirs,
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
 Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
 On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
 Divine the Sov'reign Architect had fram'd.
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interpos'd, however small he sees
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass 261
 Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
 Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens 665
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing.
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till within soar 270
 Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
 When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns
 A seraph wing'd; six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipt in heav'n; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,

Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
 And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands
 Of angels under watch; and to his state,
 And to his message high in honour rise; 289
 For on some message high they guess'd him bound.
 Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm;
 A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art; enormous blifs.
 Him through the spicy forest onward come
 Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun 300
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
 Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
 Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd:
 Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold,
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
 Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
 Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from heav'n
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive 315
 Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare. 320
 To whom thus Eve: Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
 Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains

To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes : 325
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our angel guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
 God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heav'n. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
 What order so contriv'd as not to mix
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where 340
 Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams, nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure, then strows the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great sire, to meet 350
 His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long 355
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
 Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all a-gape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
 Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
 As to' a superior nature, bowing low, 360
 Thus said : Native of heav'n, for other place
 None can than heav'n such glorious shape contain;
 Since by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places, thou hast deign'd awhile

To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild:
 Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though spirits of heav'n,
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower 375
 O'er shades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
 With flow'rets deck'd and fragrant smells; but Eve,
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from heav'n; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel Hail 385
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All Autumn pil'd, though Spring and Autumn here
 Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began 396
 Our author. Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
 To us for food, and for delight hath caus'd 400
 The earth to yield; unsavory food perhaps
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,
 That one celestial father gives to all.

To whom the angel: Therefore what he gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part 405
 Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
 No ungrateful food; and food alike those pure
 Intelligential substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created, needs
 To be sustain'd and fed; of elements 415
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
 Whence in her visage, round those spots, unpurg'd
 Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at even 425
 Sups with the ocean. Though in heav'n the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar; though from off the bows each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain; yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
 Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate: what redounds transpires
 Through spirits with ease; nor wonder, if by fire
 Of sooty coal th' empiric alchemist 440
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold
 As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve

Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence! 445

Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell. 450

Thus, when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
Of things above his world, and of their being 455
Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech

Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd: 460

Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste;
Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At heav'n's high feast to have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd:
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure, 475
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aery, last the bright consummate flower 481
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,

To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense, 485
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being
 Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance: time may come, when men
 With angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare; 495
 And from these corporeal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
 Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
 Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more. 505

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd:
 O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From centre to circumference, whereon 510
 In contemplation of created things
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
 Obedient? Can we want obedience then
 To him, or possibly his love desert, 515
 Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?

To whom the Angel: Son of Heav'n and Earth,
 Attend; That thou art happy, owe to God; 520
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself;
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
 This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.

God made thee perfect, not immutable ;
And good he made thee, but to persevere 525
He left it in thy power ; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity :
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated ; such with him 530
Finds no acceptance, nor can find ; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse ?
Myself, and all th' angelic host, that stand 535
In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds ;
On other surety none ; freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not ; in this we stand or fall : 540
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from heav'n to deepest hell : O fall,
From what high state of bliss into what woe !

To whom our great progenitor : Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills
Aerial music send : nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free ;
Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
Our Maker, and obey him whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assur'd me, and still assure : though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in heav'n, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard ;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of heav'n. 560

Thus Adam made request : and Raphael,
After short pause, assenting, thus began :

High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense th' invisible exploits 565
 Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many glorious once
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good 570
 This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein 575
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heav'ns now roll, where earth now
 rests

Upon her center pois'd, when on a day
 (For time, though in eternity, apply'd 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future) on such day
 As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith from all the ends of heav'n appear'd
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus, when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
 Orb within orb, the father infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:

Hear, all ye angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,

Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in heav'n, and shall confess him lord;
Under his great vice-gerent reign abide
United as one individual soul 610
For ever happy: him who disobeyes,
Me disobeyes, breaks union, and that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end. 615
So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleas'd; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620
Of planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
Resembles nearest; mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions, harmony divine 625
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need)
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heav'n. 635
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th' all-bounteous king, who shower'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy. 641

Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest heav'n had chang'd
 To grateful twilight (for night comes not there
 In darker veil) and rose at dew's dispos'd 646
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest.
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
 (Such are the courts of God) th' angelic throng, 650
 Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavillions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course
 Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne 656
 Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd
 Satan; so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in heav'n; he of the first,
 If not the first arch-angel, great in power, 660
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy 'gainst the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear 664
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd,
 With all his legions, to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipt, unobey'd, the throne supreme 670
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake:
 Sleep'st thou, companion dear? what sleep can close
 Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
 Of heav'n's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
 Both waking we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd;
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
 In us who serve, new counsels, to debate 681

	M	
N	W	W
II	II	II
M	M	M

What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night 685
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our king 690
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false arch-angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heav'n, 700
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to found
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice 705
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in heav'n;
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host. 710
Mean while th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread 715
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son, thus said:

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might, 720
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure

Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire ; such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne 725
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north ;
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battle what our power is, or our right.

Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defence, lest, unawares, we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer. Mighty Father ! thou thy foes 735
 Justly hast in derision, and secure
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event 740
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heav'n.

So spake the Son ; but Satan, with his powers,
 Far was advanc'd on winged speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night, 745
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones
 In their triple degrees ; regions to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globe
 Stretch'd into longitude ; which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north 755

They came, and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold ;
 The palace of great Lucifer (so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men

Interpreted) which not long after, he
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of heav'n, 765
The Mountain of the congregation call'd ;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their king,
Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself ingross'd 775
All power, and us eclips'd, under the name
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult how we may best
With what may be devis'd of honours new 780
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endur'd
To one and to his image now proclaim'd ?
But what if better counsels might erect 785
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke ?
Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend
The supple knee ? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves.
Natives and sons of heav'n, possess'd before 790
By none ; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free ; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right 795
His equals ? if in power and splendor less,
In freedom equal ; or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not ? much less for this to be our lord,
And look for adoration to th' abuse 800
Of those imperial titles, which assert

Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse, without control,
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
The deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n 810
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou, with impious obloquy, condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right indued 815
With regal sceptre, every soul in heav'n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful king? Unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign, 820
One over all with unsucceeded power.

Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good, 826
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near 830
United. But to grant it thee unjust,

That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom, 835
As by his word, the mighty Father made
All things, e'en thee; and all the spirits of heav'n
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Essential Powers: nor by his reign obscur'd, 841

But more illustrious made ; since he the head
 One of our number thus reduc'd becomes :
 His laws, our laws ; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease, then, this impious rage,
 And tempt not these ; but hasten to appease 846
 Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent angel ; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850
 Or singular and rash, whereat rejoic'd
 Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd :

That we were form'd then say'st thou ? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd 854
 From Father to his Son ? strange point and new !
 Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd : who saw
 When this creation was ? remember'st thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being ?
 We know no time when we were not as now ;
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd 860
 By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course
 Had circl'd his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native Heav'n, etherial sons.

Our puissance is our own ; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865
 Who is our equal : then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings carry to th' anointed King ; 870
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
 Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause
 Through the infinite host ; nor less for that
 The flaming seraph fearless, though alone 875
 Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold :

O alienate from God, O Spirit accurs'd,
 Forsaken of all good ; I see thy fall
 Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
 Both of thy crime and punishment ; henceforth

No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recal; 885
 That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
 Is now an iron rod, to bruise and break
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
 Yet not for thy advice, or threats I fly,
 These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
 Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
 Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
 Then who created thee lamenting learn,
 When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know. 895

So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
 Among the faithless, faithful only he;
 Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
 Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrify'd,
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900
 Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought; 905
 And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
 On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

The Argument.

RAPHAEL continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight describ'd: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devillish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelm'd both the force and machines of Satan: yet the tumult not so ending. God, on the third day, sends Messiah, his Son, for whom he had reserv'd the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepar'd for them in the deep. Messiah returns in triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless angel unpursu'd
 Through heav'n's wide champain held his wa ;
 till Morn,
 Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
 Unbar'd the gates of light. There is a cave
 Within the mount of God, fast by his throne, 5
 Where light and darkness in perpetual round
 Lodge and dislodge, by turns, which makes through
 Grateful vicissitude, like day and night ; [heav'n
 Light issues forth ; and at the other door
 Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour 10
 To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here : and now went forth the Morn
 Such as in highest heaven, array'd in gold
 Empyrean ; from before her vanish'd Night,
 Shot through with orient beams ; when all the plain
 Cover'd with thick imbattl'd squadrons bright, 16
 Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view :
 War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found
 Already known what he for news had thought 20
 To have reported : gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly powers, who him receiv'd
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriad's fall'n, yet one
 Return'd not lost : on to the sacred hill 25

They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme ; from whence a voice
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard :

Servant of God, well done ; well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd, 30
Against revolted multitudes, the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms ;
And, for the testimony of truth, hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence ; for this was all thy care 35
To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
Judg'd thee perverse : the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue, 40
By force, who reason for their law refuse,
Right reason for their law, and for their king
Messiah, who, by right of merit, reigns.

Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
And thou in military prowess next, 45
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible, lead forth my armed saints
By thousands, and by millions, rang'd for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious ; them with fire and hostile arms 50
Fearless assault, and to the brow of heav'n
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos to receive their fall. 55

So spake the sov'reign Voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreathes, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd ; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow : 60
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for heav'n in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd 65

Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds
Under their god-like leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides 70
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive 75
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt, a fiery region, stretch'd 80
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded powers of Satan hastening on 85
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That self-same day by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain 90
In the mid-way: though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire 95
Hymning the eternal Father: but the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst, exalted as a god,
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
Idol of majesty divine, inclos'd
With flaming cherubim, and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to front 105

Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length : before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides, advanc'd,
 Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold ; 110
 Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores :

O heaven ! that such resemblance of the highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and reäly 115
 Remain not : wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable ?
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have try'd 120
 Unsound and false ; nor is it ought but just,
 That he who in debate of truth hath won
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor ; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When Reason hath to deal with Force, yet so 125
 Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
 Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention more
 Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd : 130

Proud, art thou met ? thy hope was to have reach'd
 The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue : fool, not to think how vain 135
 Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms ;
 Who out of smallest things could without end
 Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly ; or with solitary hand
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow, 140
 Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and 'whelm'd
 Thy legions under darkness : but thou seest
 All are not of thy train ; there be who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone 145

Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou seest I now learn, too late,
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answer'd: Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150

Of my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
From flight, seditious angel, to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155

A third part of the gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert, who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160

From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know;
At first I thought that liberty and heav'n
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now 165

I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Minist'ring spirits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove. 170

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd:
Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains, [175

Or nature: God and Nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180

Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministring upbraid.
Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In heav'n, God, ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd; 185

Yet chains in hell, not realms expect : meanwhile
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190

On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept : ten paces huge

He back recoil'd ; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstay'd ; as if on earth 195

Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat

Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd

The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see

Thus foil'd their mightiest : ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire 201

Of battle : whereat Michael bid sound

Th' arch-angel trumpet ; through the vast of heav'n

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung

Hosanna to the highest : nor stood at gaze 205

The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd

The horrid shock : now storming fury rose,

And clamour, such as heard in heav'n, till now

Was never ; arms on armour clashing bray'd

Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210

Of brazen chariots rag'd ; dire was the noise

Of conflict ; over head the dismal hiss

Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,

And flying vaulted either host with fire.

So under fiery cope together rush'd 215

Both battles main, with ruinous assault

And inextinguishable rage ; all heav'n

Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth

Had to her centre shook. What wonder ? when

Millions of fire-encount'ring angels fought 220

On either side, the least of whom could wield

These elements, and arm him with the force

Of all their regions : how much more of power

Army against army numberless to raise

Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb, 225

Though not destroy, their happy native seat ;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent
From his strong hold of heav'n high over-rul'd
And limited their might ; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd 230
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion, led in fight yet leader seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close 235
The ridges of grim war : no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear ; each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory : deeds of eternal fame 240
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread
That war and various, sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air ; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire : long time in even scale 245
The battle hung ; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confus'd, at length 249
Saw where the sword of Michael smote and fell'd
Squadrons at once ; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting ; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his simple shield, 255
A vast circumference : at his approach
The great arch-angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd,
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown, 260
And visage all inflam'd, first thus began :
Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265

And thy adherents : how hast thou disturb'd
 Heav'n's blessed peace, and into Nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion ? how hast thou instill'd
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now prov'd false ? but think not here
 To trouble holy rest ; heav'n casts thee out
 From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence, then, and evil go with thee along, 75
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell,
 Thou and thy wicked crew ; there mingle broils,
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280

So spake the Prince of Angels ; to whom thus
 The adversary : Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these 285
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
 Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me,
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats,
 To chase me hence ? err not that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory ; which we mean to win, 290
 Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign : meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh. 295

They ended parlé, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable ; for who, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such height 300
 Of godlike power ? for likest gods they seem'd,
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great heav'n.
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles : two broad suns their shields 305

Blaz'd opposite, while Expectation stood
In horror; from each hand with speed retir'd,
Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth 310
Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both with next to almighty arm 316
Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds appear'd
In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320
Of Michael, from the armoury of God,
Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, 325
But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring shar'd
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so fore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Pass'd through him: but th' ethereal substance clos'd,
Not long divisible; and from the gash 331
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stain'd ere while so bright.
Forthwith, on all sides, to his aid was run 335
By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
From off the files of war; there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man 345

In entrails, heart, or head, liver, or reigns,
 Cannot but by annihilating die ;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air :
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
 All intellect, all sense ; and as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
 Assume, as likes them best, condense, or rare.
 Meanwhile, in other parts, like deeds deserv'd
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355
 And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king ; who him defy'd,
 And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous ; but Anon 360
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai, 365
 Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow 370
 Ariel and Orioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel, scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth ; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in heav'n, 375
 Seek not the praise of men : the other sort,
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancell'd from heav'n and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380
 For strength from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame :
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom. 385

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And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,
 With many an inroad gor'd; deformed Rout
 Enter'd, and foul Disorder; all the ground
 With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
 O'er wearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
 Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of pain
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable saints
 In cubic phalanx firm advanc'd entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes; not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd 405
 By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd.

Now Night her course began, and over heav'n
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war;
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
 Victor and vanquish'd: on the foughten field 410
 Michael and his angels prevalent
 Incamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd; and void of rest, 415
 His potentates council call'd by night;
 And in the midst thus undismay'd began:

O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
 Not to be overpow'r'd, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
 Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight
 (And if one day, why not eternal day?)
 What heaven's Lord had powerfullest to send 425

Against us from above his throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future, we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
 Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound, 435
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440
 Or equal what between us, made the odds,
 In nature none: if other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose. 445
 He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
 Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
 As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
 Sore toil, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
 And cloudy in aspect thus answer'ing spake: 450
 Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend 465

Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd, Satan reply'd:
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us, who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mold whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious heav'n, adorn'd
 With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold;
 Whose eye so superficially surveys 476
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
 Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touch'd
 With heav'n's ray, and temper'd they shoot forth 480
 So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light?
 These in their dark nativity, the deep,
 Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which into hollow engines long and round
 Thick ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth 486
 From far with thund'ring noise among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
 The thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd. 495

He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Inlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each how he
 To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have
 Impossible: yet haply of thy race [thought
 In future days, if malice should abound, 502
 Some one, intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men 50

For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew ;
 None arguing stood ; innumerable hands
 Were ready : in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 Th' originals of nature in their crude
 Conception ; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and with subtle art
 Concocted and adjusted they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd : 515
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin ; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespied.
 Now when fair Morn orient in heav'n appear'd,
 Up rose the victor angels, and to arms 525
 The matin trumpet sung : in arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded, others from the dawning hills
 Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe ; 530
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt : him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in flow
 But firm battalion ; back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd :
 Arm, warriors, arm for fight ; the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day : fear not his flight ; so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
 Sad resolution and secure : let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Borne ev'n or high ; for this day will pour down
 If I conjecture ought, no drizzling shower, 545

But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward mov'd imbattl'd: when behold 550
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginry, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt; however, witness, heav'n:
Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part; ye who appointed stand, 565
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear.

So scoffing in ambiguous words he scarce
Had ended, when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd; 570
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd) 575
Brass, ir'n, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide
Portenting hollow truce: at each behind
A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire; while we suspense 580
Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd;
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame, 584
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heav'n appear'd,

From those deep throated engines belch'd, whose roar
 Imbowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes; which on the victor host 590
 Level'd with such impetuous fury smote
 That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, angels on arch-angels roll'd;
 The sooner for their arms; unarm'd they might 595
 Have easily as spirits evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation follow'd and forc'd rout;
 Nor serv'd it to relax their ferrid files.
 What should they do? If on they rush'd, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire 605
 Of thunder; back defeated to return
 They worse abhor'd. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision call'd:

O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
 Ere while they fierce were coming; and when we,
 To entertain them fair with open front 611
 And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
 Of composition, strait they chang'd their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd
 Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps 616
 For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
 If our proposals once again were heard,
 We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood: 620
 Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
 Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
 And stumbled many; who receives them right,
 Had need from head to foot well understand; 625

Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.
So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory ; eternal might 630
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble : but they stood not long ;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose. 636
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from heav'n 640
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew ;
From their foundations loosening to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645
Up-lifting bore them in their hands : amaze,
Be sure, and terror seiz'd the rebel host,
When coming to'ards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd ;
Till on those cursed engines tripple-row 650
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep ;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air 654
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd ;
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such pris'n, though spirits of purest light, 660
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest in imitation to like arms
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hill uptore ;
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, 665

That under ground they fought in dismal shade ;
Infern l noise ; war seem'd a civil game
To thais uproar ; horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose : and now all heav'n
Had gone to wreck, with ruin overspread, 670
Had not th' Almighty Father, where she sits
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heav'n secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd ;
That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferr'd : whence to his Son,
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began :
Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680
Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly what by deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence, two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of heav'n, 685
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
These disobedient : sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd ;
For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st
Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom ;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found :
War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695
And to disorder'd Rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd, which makes
Wild work in heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine ;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far 700
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In heav'n and hell thy power above compare ; 705

And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
 To manifest the worthiest to be heir
 Of all things, to be heir and to be king
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then thou Mightiest in thy Father's might, 710
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715
 From all heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God and Messiah his anointed king.

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full; he all his Father full express'd 720
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd;

And thus the filial Godhead answer'ing spake:
 O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly thrones,
 First; highest, holiest, best, thou always seek'st
 To glorify thy son; I always thee, 725
 As his most just; this I my glory 'account.

My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleas'd declar'st thy will
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.

Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume, 730
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:

But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on, 735

Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Arm'd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,
 To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
 Unfeigned halleluiahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief. 745

So said, he o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
From the right hand of Glory, where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine, [sound
Dawning through heav'n: forth rush'd with whirlwind
The chariot of paternal Deity, 750
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of beril, and careering fires between; 756
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a saphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
He in celestial panoply all arm'd 760
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd,
And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
He onward came; far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen: 770
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in saphire thron'd,
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen; them unexpected joy surpris'd,
When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd 775
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heav'n;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
His army circumfus'd on either wing,
Under their head imbodied all in one.
Before him Power Divine his way prepar'd: 780
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd, 785

And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
 Infensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heav'nly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But, to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent, 790
 They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy; and aspiring to his height,
 Stood reimbattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail 795
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall

In universal ruin last: and now
 To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake: 800

Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand
 Ye angels arm'd; this day from battle rest:
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause,
 And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done 805

Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd
 Nor multitude; stand only and behold 810

God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By me; not you, but me, they have despis'd,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in heav'n supreme
 Kingdom, and power, and glory, appertains, 815
 Hath honour'd me according to his will.

Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd;
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength 820

They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
 His count'nance too severe to be beheld, 825

And full of wrath bent on his enemies,
At once the four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyréan shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand 835
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues; they, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode 840
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four 845
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes:
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd, 851
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volly; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heav'n: 855
The overthrown he rais'd, and, as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursu'd
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heav'n, which opening wide, 860
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind; headlong themselves they threw

Down from the verge of heav'n; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit. 865

Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw
Heav'n ruining from heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt ten-fold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin: Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
Hell their fit habitation, fraught with fire 876
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole victor from the expulsion of his foes 880
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright, 885
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid heav'n, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd 890
On high, who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus measuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd. 895
What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which beset, and war in heav'n
Among th' angelic powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With Satan; he who envies now thy state, 900
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him,
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake

His punishment, eternal misery ;
Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations ; warn
Thy weaker ; let it profit thee to have heard
By terrible example the reward 910
Of disobedience ; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell ; remember, and fear to transgress. 912

THE END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

The Argument.

RAPHAEL, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory and attendance of angels to perform the work of creation in six days: the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his re-ascension into heaven.

DESCEND from heav'n, Urania, by that name
 If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
 Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
 Above the flight of Pegaséan wing.
 The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou 5
 Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
 Of old Olympus dwell'st, but heav'nly born,
 Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
 Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
 Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
 In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
 With thy celestial song. Up led by thee,
 Into the heav'n of heav'ns I have presum'd,
 An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy temp'ring; with like safety guided down 15
 Return me to my native element:
 Lest from this flying steed unrein'd, (as once
 Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,)
 Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
 Erroneous there to wander and forlorn. 20
 Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere;
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
 To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 25
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
 And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn

Purples the east : still govern thou my song, 30
Urania, and fit audience find, though few ;
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores ;
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensu'd when Raphael 40
The affable arch-angel, had forewarn'd
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostacy, by what befel in heav'n
To those apostates, lest the like befall
In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted Tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obey'd amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wand'ring. He, with his consort Eve, 50
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration, and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in heav'n,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss 55
With such confusion : but the evil, soon
Driv'n back, redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose : and now 60
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of heav'n and earth conspicuous first began,
When, and whereof created, for what cause,
What within Eden or without was done 65
Before his memory, as one whose drouth
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeding thus to ask his heav'nly guest :

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70
Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter, by favour sent
Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss:
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe 76
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sov'reign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known, 85
How first began this heav'n which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
Embracing round this florid earth, what cause 90
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest
Through all eternity so late to build
In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd, if unforbid thou may'st unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets ask 95
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in heav'n,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of Nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring 105
Silence, and Sleep list'ning to thee will watch;
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:
 And thus the godlike angel answer'd mild: 110
 This also thy request with caution ask'd
 Obtain: though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve 115
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing; such commission from above
 I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own invention hope
 Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
 To none communicable in earth or heav'n:
 Enough is left besides to search and know. 125
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temp'rance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

Know then, that after Lucifer from heav'n
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of angels than that star the stars among)
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
 Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135
 Victorious with his saints, th' omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
 At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
 He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see, 145
 Their station; Heav'n yet populous retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms,
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent

With ministeries due and solemn rites :
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled heav'n,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience try'd,
And earth be chang'd to heav'n, and heav'n to earth,
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Mean while inhabit lax, ye Pow'rs of heav'n,
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done :
My over-shadowing spirit and might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be heav'n and earth,
Boundless the deep, because I Am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I uncircumscrib'd myself retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.
So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion, but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in heav'n,
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will;
Glory they sung to the Most High, good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace :
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driv'n out th' ungodly from his sight
And th' habitations of the just; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd

Good out of evil to create, instead
 Of spirits malign a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the Hierarchies : mean while the Son
 On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with Omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of majesty divine ; sapience and love 195
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.

About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
 And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
 From th' armoury of God, where stand of old 200
 Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,

Celestial equipage ; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
 Attendant on their Lord : Heav'n open'd wide 205
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound

On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
 On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore 210

They view'd the vast immeasurable abyis
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole. 215

Silence ye troubed waves, and thou deep, peace,
 Said then th' omnific Word ; your discord end :
 Nor stay'd, but on the wings of cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn ; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice : him all his train
 Follow'd in bright procession to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.

Then stay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things :

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One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230
This be thy just circumference, O World.
Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth,
Matter unform'd and void : darkness profound
Cover'd th' abyss : but on the watry calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth,
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purg'd
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs
Adverse to life : then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like ; the rest to several place 240
Disparted, and between spun out the air ;
And earth, self-balanc'd, on her centre hung.

Let there be light, said God ; and forthwith light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native east 245
To journey through the aery gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not ; she, in a cloudy tabernacle,
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good ;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
Divided : light the Day, and darkness Night,
He nam'd. Thus was the first day Ev'n and Morn :
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial choirs, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld ; 255
Birth-day of heav'n and earth ; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works ; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

Again, God said, Let there be firmament 261
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters : and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd 265
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round : partition firm and sure,

The waters underneath from those above
 Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
 Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
 ChrySTALLINE ocean, and the loud misrule
 Of Chaos far remov'd, lest fierce extremes
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
 And heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so even
 And morning chorus sung the second day. 275

The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryo immature involv'd,
 Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
 Main ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warm
 Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe, 280
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Sate with genial moisture, when God said,
 Be gather'd now ye waters under heav'n
 Into one place, and let dry land appear.
 Immediately the mountains huge appear 285
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky:
 So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters: thither they 290
 Hastened with glad precipitance, uproll'd
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
 Part rise in chrystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
 On the swift floods: as armies at the call 295
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
 If steep, with torrent rapture; if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill, 300
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land earth, and the great receptacle

Of congregated waters he call'd seas;
And saw that it was good, and said, Let the earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom smelling sweet: and these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept 320
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Imbattel'd in her field, and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were
crown'd, 326
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up, and water'd all the ground; and each
Plant of the field, which, ere it was in th' earth, 335
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.

Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of heav'n to divide 340
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years,
And let them be for lights as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of heav'n
To give light on the earth; and it was so. 345
And God made two great lights, great for their use

To man; the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern; and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of heav'n
To illuminate the earth, and rule the day 350
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first, 355
Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sow'd with stars the heav'n thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
Hither as to their fountain other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heav'n's high road; the grey
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon, 375
But opposite in level'd west was set
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him, for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night, then in the east her turn she shines, 380
Revolv'd on heav'n's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorn'd
With their bright luminaries that set and rose, 385
Glad ev'ning and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters generate
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Display'd on th' open firmament of heav'n. 390
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds,
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas, 396
And lakes, and running streams the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea: part single or with mate
Graze the sea weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray; or sporting with quick glance, 405
Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;
Or in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk 410
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean: there Leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills 415
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that, soon
Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclos'd
Their callow young, but feather'd soon and fledge 420
They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime
With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise 425
In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their way,

Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their airy caravan high over seas
Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
Easing their flight ; so steers the prudent crane 430
Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air
Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes :
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till ev'n, nor then the solemn nightingale 435
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays :
Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd
Their downy breast ; the swan, with arched neck,
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet ; yet oft they quit 440
The dank, and rising on stiff penons, tower
The mid aëreal sky : others on ground
Walk'd firm : the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and th' other, whose gay train
Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue 445
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Ev'ning and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.
The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin, when God said, 450
Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle and creeping things, and beast of th' Earth,
Each in their kind. The Earth obey'd, and strait
Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455
Limb'd and full grown : out of the ground up rose
As from his lair the wild beast, where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den ;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd :
The cattle in the fields and meadows green : 460
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calv'd ; now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free 464
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce,

The libard, and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground 469
 Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
 His vastness: fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants: ambiguous between sea and land
 The river horse and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475
 Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries deck'd of Summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
 These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
 Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet, provident 485
 Of future, in small room large heart inclos'd,
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
 Of commonality: swarming next appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd: the rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
 Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course; earth in her rich attire
 Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd
 Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd;
 There wanted yet the master-work, the end 505
 Of all yet done; a creature who, not prone

And brute as other creatures, but indu'd
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature, and upright with front serene
 Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence 510
 Magnanimous to correspond with heav'n,
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
 Directed in devotion, to adore
 And worship God supreme, who made him chief 515
 Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father (for where is not he
 Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:

Let us make now Man in our image, Man
 In our similitude, and let them rule 520
 Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
 Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
 This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O Man,
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd 525
 The breath of life; in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God
 Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
 Male he created thee, but thy consort
 Female for race; then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
 Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
 Over fish of the sea and fowl of th' air,
 And every living thing that moves on th' earth.
 Wherever thus created, for no place 535
 Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
 He brought thee into this delicious grove,
 This garden, planted with the trees of God,
 Delectable both to behold and taste;
 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
 Gave thee; all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,
 Variety without end; but of the tree
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou dy'st;
 Death is the penalty impos'd; beware, 545
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin

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Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good ;
So ev'n the morn accomplish'd the sixth day ; 550
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the heav'n of heav'ns, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new-created world,
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
Follow'd with acclamation and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd
Angelic harmonies : the earth, the air 560
Resounded : (thou remember'st, for thou heardst,)
The heav'ns and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station list'ning stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung, 565
Open, ye heav'ns, your living doors ; let in
The great Creator, from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a World ;
Open, and henceforth oft ; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just Men 570
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending : he through heav'n,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led 575
To God's eternal house direct the way,
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest 580
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and Twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning Night ; when at the holy mount
Of heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,

The Filial Power arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father, for he also went
Invisible, yet stay'd (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordain'd, 590
Author and end of all things, and from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe, 595
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds
Fuming from golden censers hid the mount. 600
Creation and the six days acts they sung,
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r: what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? greater now in thy return
Than from the giant angels; thee that day 605
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate and their counsels vain 610
Thou hast repell'd, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another heav'n
From heav'n gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyalin, the glassy sea;
On amplitude almost immense with stars 620
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth with her nether ocean circumfus'd, 624
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd,

Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright.

630

So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With halleluiahs: thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that posterity,
Inform'd by thee, might know: if else thou seek'st
Ought, not surpassing human measure, say.

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END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

The Argument.

ADAM enquires concerning celestial motions, is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents, and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
 So charming left his voice, that he a while
 Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear;
 Then as new wak'd thus gratefully reply'd:
 What thanks sufficient, or what recompence 5
 Equal have I to render thee, divine
 Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
 This friendly condescension to relate
 Things else by me unsearchable, now heard 10
 With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
 With glory attributed to the high
 Creator? something yet of doubt remains,
 Which only thy solution can resolve.
 When I behold this goodly frame, this world 15
 Of heav'n and earth consisting, and compute
 Their magnitudes, this earth, a spot, a grain,
 An atom, with the firmament compar'd
 And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
 Spaces incomprehensible (for such 20
 Their distance argues, and their swift return
 Diurnal) merely to officiate light
 Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
 One day and night in all their vast survey
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire, 25
 How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold to this one use,
 For ought appears, and on their orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day

Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives, 35
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our sire, and by his count'nance seem'd
Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve 40
Perceiving where she sat retir'd in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prosper'd bud and bloom, 45
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
And, touch'd by her fair tendence, gladlier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd 50
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relator she preferr'd
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
With conjugal caresses; from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
Such pairs in love and mutual honour join'd?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended, for on her as queen 60
A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now to Adam's doubt propos'd
Benevolent and facil thus reply'd: 65

To ask or search I blame thee not, for heav'n
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
This to attain, whether heav'n move or earth, 70
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest

From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire; or if they list to try 75
Conjecture, he his fabric of the heav'n
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model heav'n
And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances, how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:
Already by thy reasoning this I guess, 85
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor heav'n such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit: Consider first, that great 90
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,
Though, in comparison of heav'n, so small,
Nor glitt'ring, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
But in the fruitful earth; there first receiv'd
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee earth's 'habitant.
And for the heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak 100
The Maker's high magnificence, who built,
So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest 105
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add 109
Speed almost spiritual; me thou think'st not slow,
Who since the morning hour set out from heav'n

Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden, distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the heav'n's, to show 115
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest, and what if seventh to these
The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move? 130
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,
Or save the Sun his labours, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel 135
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief
If Earth industrious of herself fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet Night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light 140
Sent from her through the wild transpicious air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star
Inlightning her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest 145
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry
Communicating male and female light, 150
Which two great sexes animate the world,

Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in Nature unpossess'd
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not,
Whether the sun, predominant in heav'n, 160
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
He from the East his flaming road begin,
Or she from West her silent course advance
With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even, 165
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou 170
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; heav'n is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition or degree, 176
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd
Not of earth only but of highest heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd:
How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure 180
Intelligence of heav'n, angel serene,
And freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
That not to know at large of things remote

From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence, 195
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand,
Useful, whence haply mention may arise 200
Of something not unseasonable to ask
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deign'd.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard; 205
And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
For while I sit with thee, I seem in heav'n; 210
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree; pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbu'd, bring to their sweetness's no satiety. 216

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek:
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd, 220
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
Nor less think we in heav'n, of thee on earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire 225
Gladly into the ways of God with man:
For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set
On man his equal love: say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as besel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
Far on excursion tow'ard the gates of hell;

Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work,
 Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as Sov'reign King, and to inure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found fast shut 240
 The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light 245
 Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now; for I attend,
 Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the godlike Power, and thus our Sire:
 For man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid
 In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun 255
 Soon dry'd, and on the reeking moisture fed,
 Strait toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
 And gaz'd awhile the ample sky, till rais'd
 By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260
 Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams; by these,
 Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd, 265
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
 Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
 Knew not: to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;

My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures tell, 276
Tell if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent;
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore 280
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know?
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light, when answer none return'd, 285
On a green shady bank profuse of flowers
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My droused sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state 290
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd: One came, methought of shape divine, 295
And said, Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First father, call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd.
So saying by the hand he took me rais'd, 300
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, inclos'd with goodliest trees 304
Planted, with walks, and bowers, that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to th' eye
Tempting stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
Had lively shadow'd: here had new begun

My wand'ring, had not he who was my guide
Up hither from among the trees appear'd,
Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell 315
Submits: he rear'd me, and whom thou sought'st I am,
Said mildly, author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember that I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence: for know
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
From that day mortal and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
Of woe and sorrow. Sternly he pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd:
Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
After their kinds; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection; understand the same 345
Of fish within their watry residence,
Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element to draw the thinner air.
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two, these cowering low, 350
With blandishment, each bird stoop'd on his wing.

PARADISE LOST.

I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endu'd
 My sudden apprehension: but in these
 I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
 And to the heav'nly vision thus presum'd:

O by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
 Surpassest far my naming, how may I
 Adore thee, author of this universe, 360
 And all this good to man? for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,
 Thou hast provided all things: but with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness who can enjoy alone, 365
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?

Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
 As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd:
 What call'st thou Solitude? is not the Earth
 With various living creatures, and the air 370
 Replenish'd and all these at thy command
 To come and play before thee? know'st thou not
 Their language and their ways? they also know,
 And reason not contemptibly; with these
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large. 375
 So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
 So ord'ring. I with leave of speech implor'd,
 And humble deprecation thus reply'd:

Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly pow'r;
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferior far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
 Giv'n and receiv'd; but in disparity
 The one intense, the other still remiss
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike: of fellowship I speak
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
 All rational delight, wherein the brute

Cannot be human consort; they rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness,
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd;
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl, 395
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.

Whereto th' Almighty answer'd not displeas'd:
 A nice and subtle happiness I see
 Thou to thyself propos'st, in the choice 400
 Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone 405
 From all eternity, for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.

How have I then with whom to hold converse,
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
 To me inferior, infinite descents 410
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?

He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd: To attain
 The height and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things;
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415
 Is no deficiency found: not so is man,

But in degree the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help,
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Shouldst propagate, already infinite, 220
 And through all numbers absolute, though one;

But man by number is to manifest
 His single imperfection, and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiply'd,
 In unity defective, which requires 425
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.

Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication, yet so pleas'd,
 Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt 430
 Of union or communion, deify'd;

I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complaisance find.
Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found, which gain'd 435
This answer from the gracious voice divine :

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,
And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself,
Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
My image, not imparted to the brute,
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
And be so minded still ; I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone, 445
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet :
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd ;
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more ; for now
My earthly by his heav'nly overpow'd
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to the height
In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460
Of fancy, my internal sight, by which
Abstract, as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood :
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took 465
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh ; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd :
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands ;
Under his forming hands a creature grew 470
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,

That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd *now*
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before, 475
 And into all things from her air inspir'd
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
 To find her, or for ever to deplore
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable: on she came,
 Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen, 485
 And guided by his voice, not uninform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites:
 Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud: 490
 This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495
 Before me; woman is her name, of man
 Extracted; for this cause he shall forego
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.
 She heard me thus; and though divinely brought, 500
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,
 The more desirable; or, to say all, 505
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd;
 I follow'd her; she what was honour'd knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
 I led her blushing like the morn: all heav'n,

And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selected influence ; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs 515
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As us'd, or not, works in the mind no change, 525
Nor vehement desire ; these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds ; but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch ; here passion first I felt, 530
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmov'd, here only weak
Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.
Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain ; 535
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough ; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end 540
Of Nature her th' inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties which most excel,
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given 545
O'er other creatures ; yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best ; 550
All higher knowledge in her presence falls

Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discountenanc'd, and like Folly shows ;
 Authority and Reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made 555
 Occasionally ; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind, and nobleness their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.

To whom the angel with contracted brow : 560
 Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part ;
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
 Of wisdom ; she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things 565
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.

For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
 An outside ? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
 Not thy subjection : weigh with her thyself ; 570
 Then value : oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
 Well manag'd ; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows : 575

Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsaf'd
 To cattle and each beast ; which would not be
 To them made common and divulg'd, if ought
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585

What higher in her society thou find'st
 Attractive, human, rational, love still ;
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not ; Love refines
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat 590
 In reason, and is judicious, is the scale

By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.

To whom thus half abash'd Adam reply'd : 595
Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor ought
In procreation, common to all kinds,

(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem)
So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600

Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions, mix'd with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both our soul ;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair ; 605

More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
Yet these subject not ; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variouſly representing ; yet still free 610
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.

To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou say'st
Leads up to heav'n, is both the way and guide ;
Bear with me, then, if lawful what I ask ;
Love not th' heav'nly spirits, and how their love 615
Express they, by looks only, or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?

To whom the angel with a smile, that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,
Answer'd : Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 620
Us happy, and without love no happiness.

Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none

Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars ; 625
Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure

Desiring ; nor restrain'd conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more ; the parting sun 630

Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles

Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love; but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway 635
Thy judgment to do ought which else free will
Would not admit; thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware,
I, in thy persevering, shall rejoice,
And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall 640
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies,
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction: Since to part, 645
Go, heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.
Gentle to me, and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind 650
Be good and friendly still, and oft return.

So parted they; the angel up to heav'n
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

The Argument.

SATAN, having compass'd the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by night into Paradise, enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alledging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone: Eve, loath to be thought not circumspect, or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields: the serpent finds her alone: his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attain'd to human speech and such understanding not till now; the serpent answers, that, by tasting of a certain tree in the garden, he attain'd both to speech and reason, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden: The serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments, induces her at length to eat: she, pleas'd with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not, at last brings him of the fruit, relates what persuaded her to eat thereof: Adam, at first, amaz'd, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her: and extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit: the effects thereof in them both: they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

NO more of talk where God or angel guest
 With man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake
 Rural repast, permitting him the while
 Venial discourse unblam'd; I now must change 5
 Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
 Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,
 And disobedience: on the part of heav'n,
 Now alienated, distance, and distaste,
 Anger and just rebuke, and judgment giv'n, 10
 That brought into this world a world of woe,
 Sin, and her shadow Death, and Misery,
 Death's harbinger: sad task, yet argument
 Not less but more heroic than the wrath
 Of stern Achille's on his foe pursu'd 15
 Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd,
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
 Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's son;
 If answerable style I can obtain 20

His entrance, and forewarn'd the cherubim
That kept their watch ; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of sev'n continued nights he rode
With Darkness, thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times cross'd the ear of Night 65
From pole to pole, traversing each colure ;
On the eighth return'd ; and on the coast averse
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place, 69
Now not, tho' Sin, not Time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life ;
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan involv'd in rising mist, then sought 75
Where to lie hid : sea he had search'd and land
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mœotis, up beyond the river Ob ;
Downward as far antarctic ; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd 80
At Darien, thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus : thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found 85
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him, after long debate, irrésolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
From sharpest sight : for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtilty
Proceeding, which in other beasts observ'd,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power 95
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd :
O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd
More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built 100

With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God after better worse would build?
Terrestrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other heav'ns
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems 105
In thee concentrating all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in heav'n
Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
Centring receiv'st from all those orbs; in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue' appears;
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth 111
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in man.
With what delight could I have walk'd the round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange 115
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forests crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in heav'n 124
To dwell, unless by mast'ring heav'n's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyed, 130
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe,
In woe then; that Destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among 135
Th' infernal powers, in one day to have marr'd
What he Almighty styl'd, six nights and days
Continued making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving, though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed 140

From servitude inglorious well nigh half
Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers : he, to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original, 150
With heav'nly spoils, our spoils : what he decreed
H' effected ; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and Earth his seat ;
Him lord pronounc'd, and, O indignity !
Subjected to his service angel wings, 155
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge : of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
To hide me and the dark intent I bring.
Of foul descent ! that I, who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
Into a beast, and mix'd with bestial slime, 165
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of Deity aspir'd ;
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to ? who aspires must down as low
As high he soar'd, obnoxious first or last 170
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils ;
Let it ; I reckon not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite 175
Of heav'n, this man of clay, son of Despise,
Whom us the more to spite, his Maker rais'd
From dust : spite then with spite is best repaid.
So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on 180

His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The serpent; him fast sleeping soon he found
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rol'd,
 His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles :
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den, 185
 Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb
 Fearless unfear'd he slept : in at his mouth
 The Devil enter'd, and his brutal sense,
 In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
 With act intelligential ; but his sleep 190
 Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of morn.
 Now when, as sacred light began to dawn
 In Eden on the humid flowers, that breath'd
 Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,
 From th' Earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful smell, forth came the Human Pair,
 And join'd their vocal worship to the choir
 Of creatures wanting voice ; that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs ; 200
 Then commune how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work : for much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two gard'ning so wide,
 And Eve first to her husband thus began :
 Adam, well may we labour still to dress 205
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
 Our pleasant task enjoin'd, but till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
 Luxurious by restraint ; what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
 One night or two with wanton growth derides
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present ;
 Let us divide our labours ; thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind 215
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb ; while I
 In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon :
 For while so near each other thus all day 220

Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our day's work brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd? 225

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd :
Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear,
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd
How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass
Unprais'd : for nothing lovlier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd 235
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
To brute deny'd, and are of love the food, 240
Love not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us : but if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield :
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befal thee sever'd from me ; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe,
Envyng our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255
By sly assault ; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope, to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need ; 260

Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265
That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus reply'd:
Offspring of heav'n and earth, and all earth's lord,
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275
And from the parting angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou should'st my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers 285
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?
To whom with healing words Adam reply'd: 290
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve,
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperges
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
And anger would resent the offer'd wrong, 300

Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me th' attempt shall light, 305
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous others' aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every virtue, in thy sight 310
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome, or over-reach'd,
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel 315
When I am present, and thy trial chuse
With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd?
So spake domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit, straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endu'd
Single with like defence, wherever met, 325
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns 330
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
Favour from heav'n, our witness from th'event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd 335
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness if this be so, 340

And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.
 To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd:
 O Woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordain'd them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345
 Of all that he created, much less man,
 Or ought that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
 Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
 But God left free the will, for what obeys
 Reason is free, and reason he made right,
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,
 Left, by some fair-appearing good surpris'd,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will, 355
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me 365
 Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
 First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
 But if thou think trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence, rely
 On what thou hast of virtue, summon all,
 For God tow'ards thee hath done his part, do thine.
 So spake the Patriarch of Mankind; but Eve 376
 Persisted; yet submits, though last, reply'd:
 With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touch'd only, that our trial, when least sought, 380

May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek ;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse. 384

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Soft she withdrew, and like a woodnymph light,
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves ; but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and goddess like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd, 390
But with such gard'ning tools as art, yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or angels brought.

To Pales or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd ; Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus ; or to Ceres in her prime, 395
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.

Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated, she to him as oft engag'd 400

To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noon-tide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return ! event perverse ! 405

Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast or sound repose :
Such ambush hid among sweet flowers and shades
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss.

For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them 415

The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendence or plantation for delight ;
By fountain or by shady rivulet 420

He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Viel'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood, 425
Half spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold
Hung drooping, unsustain'd; them she upstays 430
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm; 435
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
Among thick woven arbourets and flowers
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd,
Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd 440
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son,
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admir'd, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent, 445
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more,
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold 455
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone; her heav'nly form
Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture or least action overaw'd 460

His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought :
 That space the evil-one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
 Stupidly good, of enmity disarm'd, 465
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge ;
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid heav'n, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordain'd : then soon 470
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites :

Thoughts, whither have ye led me ! with what sweet
 Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us ! hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for hell, hope here to taste 476
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying ; other joy
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles : behold alone 480
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould, 485
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
 I not ; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in heav'n.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,
 Not terrible, through terror be in love 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger, under shew of love well feign'd,
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, inclos'd
 In serpent, inmate bad, and tow'rd Eve 495
 Address'd his way ; not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
 Fold above fold a surging maze, his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes ; 500

With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd 505
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the God
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd 510
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought,
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail; 515
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she busied heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast, more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
 He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamel'd neck, 525
 Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:

Wonder not, sovereign Mistress, if perhaps
 Thou can'st, who art sole wonder; much less arm
 Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540

With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admir'd; but here,
In this inclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be
A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd [seen
By angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
Though at the voice much marvelling: at length
Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake:
What may this mean? language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
The first at least of these I thought deny'd 555
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day
Created mute to all articulate sound;
The latter I demur, for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight? 565
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd:
Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,
Easy to me it is to tell thee all 569
What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be
I was at first as other beasts that graze [obey'd:
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high;
Till on a day roving the field, I chanc'd 575
A goodly tree far distant to behold,
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savory odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580

Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
 Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
 For high from ground the branches would require 590
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire,
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill 595
 I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
 At feed or fountain never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of reason in my inward powers, and speech 600
 Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Consider'd all things visible in heav'n
 Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good; 605
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
 United I beheld; no fair to thine
 Equivalent or second, which compell'd
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
 Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame.
 So talk'd the spirited fly snake; and Eve,
 Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus reply'd:
 Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt 615
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd:
 But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
 For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
 To us, in such abundance lies our choice, 620

As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad : 625
Empress, the way is ready, and not long ;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
East by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm : if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. 630

Lead then, said Eve. He leading swiftly roll'd
In tangls, and made intricate seem strait,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest. As when a wand'ring fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night 635
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads th' amaz'd night-wand'rer from his way 640
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far ;
So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe ; 645

Which, when she saw, thus to her guide she spake :
Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here t' excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. 650
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch ;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice ; the rest we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.

To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd : 655
Indeed ! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these graden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air ?

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless : of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat ; 660
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more
The tempter, but with shew of zeal and love [bold
To man, and indignation at his wrong, 666
New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some orator renown'd 670
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience, ere the tongue,
Sometimes in height began, as no delay 675
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right ;
So standing, moving, or to height up grown,
The Tempter all impassion'd thus began :

O sacred, wise, and wisdom giving plant,
Mother of science, now I feel thy power 680
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.

Queen of this universe, do not believe
Those rigid threats of death ; ye shall not die : 685

How should you ? by the fruit ? it gives you life
To knowledge : by the Threatner ? look on me,
Me who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate

Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot, 690
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open ? or will God incense his ire

For such a petty trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be, 695
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil ;
Of good, how just ? of evil, if what is evil

Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt you, and be just; 700
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? why, but to awe;
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? he knows that in the day 705
Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I of brute human, ye of human gods,
So ye shall die, perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
Tho' threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are gods, that man may not become 716
As they, participating god-like food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I question it, for this fair earth I see, 720
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That who so eats thereof forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
Th' offence that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
In heav'nly breasts? These, these, and many more 730
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddeſs humane, reach then, and freely taſte.
He ended, and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too eaſy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold 735
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the ſound
Yet rung of his perſuaſive words, impregn'd
With reaſon, to her ſeeming, and with truth:

Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
 An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell 740
 So savory of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclunable now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd:
 Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits, 745
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
 Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
 Thy praise he also who forbids thy use 750
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree
 Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
 Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good
 By thee communicated, and our want: 755
 For good unknown sure is not had; or had,
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
 In plain, then, what forbids he but to know,
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
 Such prohibitions bind not. But if death 760
 Binds us with after-bands, what profits then
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!
 How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons and discerns,
 Irrational till then. For us alone 766
 Was death invented? or to us deny'd
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy 770
 The good befall'n him, author unsuspected,
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
 What fear I then, rather what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty? 775
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then

GOOD

HERE TO THERE TO

OG : GOOD : GOOD

GOOD : GOOD : GOOD

IS TO THERE TO THERE TO

To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound, and Nature, from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket flunk
The guilty serpent, and well might; for Eve, 785
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted; whether true,
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was God-head from her thought.
Greedy she ingorg'd without restraint, 791
And knew not eating death: satiate at length,
And heightend as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began:
O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees 795
In Paradise, of operation bless'd
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give; 805
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire, 810
And I perhaps am secret. Heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies 815
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake

Full happiness with me, or rather not,
 But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820
 Without co-partner? so to add what wants
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal, and perhaps,
 A thing not undesirable, sometimes
 Superior; for inferior, who is free? 825
 This may be well: but what if God have seen,
 And death ensue? then I shall be no more;
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
 A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve; 830
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
 But first low reverence done, as to the power 835
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
 Into the plant scintillial sap, deriv'd
 From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland to adorn 840
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
 Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd;
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845
 Misgave him; he the fault'ring measure felt;
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted: by the tree
 Of knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit that downy smil'd,
 New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt, 854
 Which with bland words at will she thus address'd:
 Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
 Thy presence; agony of love till now



Alonied stood and blank white horror chill
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd
 From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed.

See Paradise Lost, Vol. I. Book 9. line 1000.

Printed by J. Kier.

Printed for Cadogan Alley 1798.

Engraved by J. Moyman.

Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought, 860
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but to divine effect 865
To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but henceforth 870
Endu'd with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond; opener mine eyes, 875
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 880
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit. 885

Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed;
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke: 895

O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,

Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet !
 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote !
 Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddence, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidd'n ? some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown, 905
 And me with thee hath ruin'd, for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die :
 How can I live without thee, how forego
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn ? 910
 Should God create another Eve, and I
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
 Would never from my heart : no, no, I feel
 The link of Nature draw me : flesh of flesh,
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state 915
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
 Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd : 920

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, advent'rous Eve,
 And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
 Had it been only coveting to eye
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
 Much more to taste it under ban to touch. 925
 But past who can recal, or done undo ?
 Nor God omnipotent, nor Fate ; yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
 Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first 930
 Made common and unhallow'd ere our taste ;
 Not yet on him found deadly ; he yet lives ;
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man
 Higher degree of life ; inducement strong
 To us, as likely tasting to attain 935
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be
 But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,

Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignify'd so high, 940
Set over all his works, which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath 946
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph, and say; fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next? 950
Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Confort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcibly within my heart I feel 955
The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be sever'd; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
So Adam; and thus Eve to him reply'd: 960
O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung, 965
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
Rather than death, or ought than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear, 970
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
Whose virtue, (for of good still good proceeds
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else 975
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
Th's my attempt, I would sustain alone

The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 980
 Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assur'd
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful love unequall'd; but I feel
 Far otherwise th' event; not death, but life
 Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
 Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste.
 And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
 Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
 In recompence (for such compliance bad
 Such recompence best merits) from the bough 995
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat
 Against his better knowledge, not deceiv'd,
 But fondly overcome with female charm.
 Earth trembled from her entrails as again 1000
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan,
 Sky lour'd, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original: while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate 1005
 Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
 Him with her lov'd society, that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
 Far other operation first display'd,
 Carnal desire inflaming: he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid: in lust they burn; 1015
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move:
 Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
 And elegant, of sapience no small part,

EvvE

EvvE EvvE EvvE

EvvE EvvE EvvE

EvvE EvvE EvvE

Since to each meaning favor we apply,
And palate call judicious ; I the praise 1020
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting ; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd, 1025
For this one tree had been forbidden ten,
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare ;
For never did thy beauty since the day
I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree.

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood 1035
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof embower'd,
He led her nothing loath ; flowers were the couch,
Pansies and violets and asphodel, 1040
And hyacinth ; Earth's freshest, softest lap.

There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit, 1046
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhal'd ; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050
Incumber'd, now had left them ; up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their mind
How darken'd ; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone ;
Just confidence, and native righteousness, 1056
And honour from about them, naked left
To guilty shame ; he cover'd, but his robe

Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot lap 1060
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength, they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute,
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd, 1065
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd:
O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising; since our eyes 1070
Open'd we find, indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075
Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence the evil store;
E'en shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085
Obscur'd, where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sun light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening: cover me, ye pines!
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round 1096
Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsel'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they choose 1100
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as, at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillar's shade 1106
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between;
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loopholes cut through thickest shade; those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe, 1111
And with what skill they had, together sew'd,
To gird their waste; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of state 1115
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feather'd cincture, naked else and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once 1125
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
For understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sov'reign reason claim'd 1130
Superior sway: from thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd:

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words and stay'd
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135
Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
Remain'd still happy; not as now, despoil'd

Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
 The faith they owe ; when earnestly they seek 1141
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve :
 What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam, severe !
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145
 Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps ? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou could'st not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake ; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side ?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
 Being as I am, why didst not thou the head 1155
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger as thou saidst ?
 Too facil then, thou didst not much gainsay ;
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd :
 Is this the love, is this the recompence
 Of mine to thee, ungrateful Eve, express'd
 Immutable when thou wert lost, not I, 1165
 Who might have liv'd and joy'd immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee ?
 And am I now upbraided as the cause
 Of thy transgressing ? not enough severe,
 It seems, in thy restraint : what could I more ? 1170
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
 The danger and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait ; beyond this had been force,
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on, secure 1175
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial ; and perhaps
 I also err'd in overmuch admiring

What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue 1180
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in women overtrusting
Lest her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus, they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of their vain contest appear'd no end. 1189

THE END OF THE NINTH BOOK.



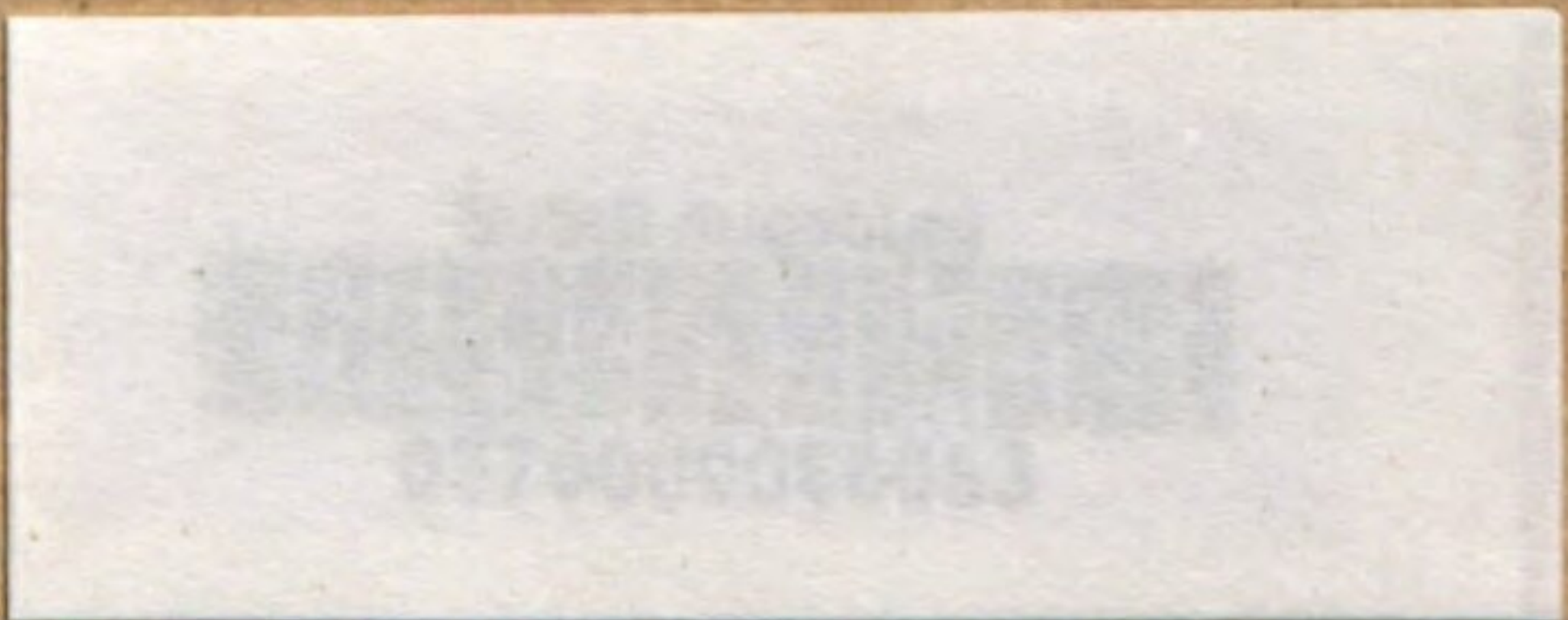
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L. B.

Millar



Milton, John, 1608-1674 / Johnson, Samuel / Addison, Joseph, 1672-1719

The poetical works of John Milton From the text of Dr. Newton ; to which
are prefixed, the life of the author, a criticism on his works, by Dr.
Johnson, and a critique on Paradise Lost, by Joseph Addison
Bd.: 1.

London [1796]

Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek -- LA 3392 -1
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